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THE NEW YORKER

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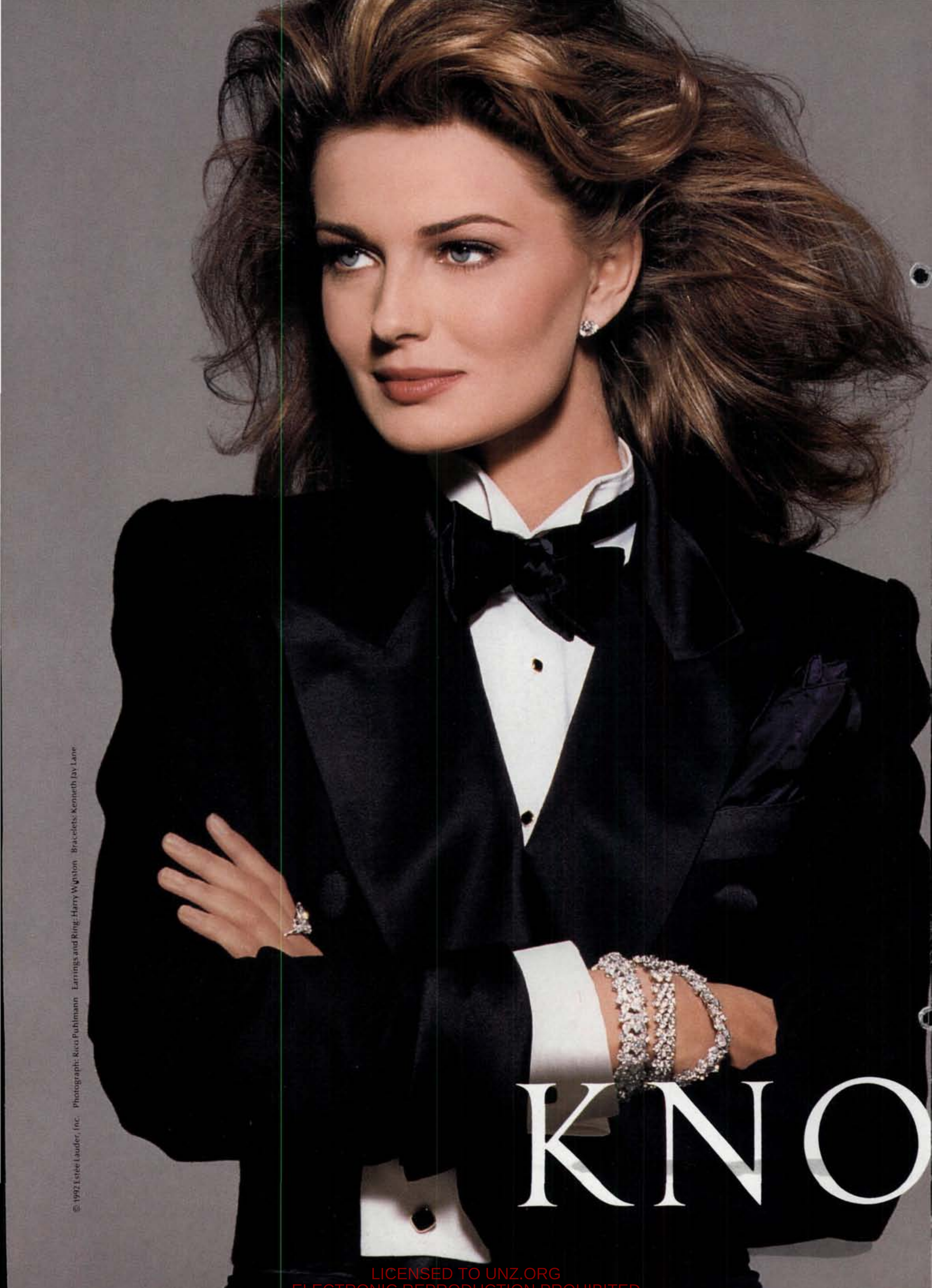
DEAR SANTA
To Santa Claus
Dearest Santa
Best wishes, Greg
MY DEAR MR. CLAUS
Gratefully, Randy
Joanie
To Mr. S. Claus
Your Mikey
Ned
Kristen
Santa Claus I want
Louise
Dear Santa
Maria
Santa!
Mr. Claus I'm sorry. It wasn't my fault. Just bring lots of stuff. Your choice. Spencer
Dearest Santa
Sincerely, Willie
Angelica
Greg
Sincerely, Devon
Thank you so much, Sarah
Eddie
Love, Sally
Dear Santa,
many thanks, Griff
Dear Santa,
Jasper
Bennie
Yours, Jessica
Dear Santa, Triceratops, Brontosaurus, Tyrannosaurus
Love, Andrew
Your friend Louis
Love, Chester
Dear Santa
Dear Santa, I have been a good boy. Please
Tommie
Dear Santa,
Alex
Dear Santa
MR. S. CLAUS
Javier
Sue
To my good buddy Santa
Rebecca
Love, Melissa
Davey
To Santa
Yours Truly, Lee
To Santa North Pole
Martha
Charlie Jr.
Dear Santa



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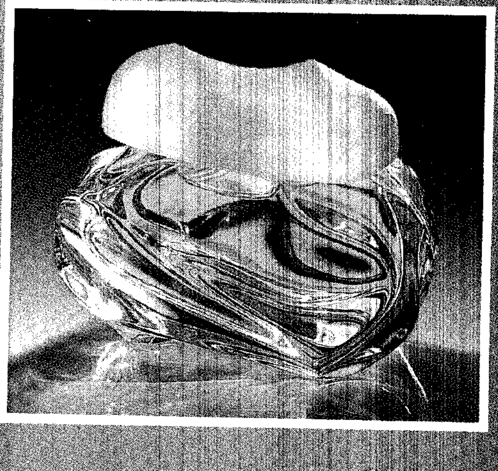


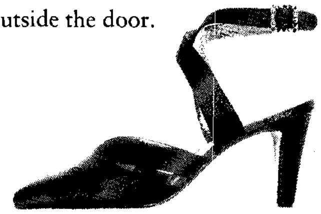
It was as though she were still in the room.
Her gentle fragrance

[ROSE DE ROSINE PERFUME]

lingered behind like soft music
floating on a breeze. He remembered
the sheen in her black hair,
the sparkle in her eyes more
blue than a Riviera sky.
A single black glove

[PORTOLANO GLOVES]

that had stretched from the
tender curve of her upper arm
to her delicate fingertips lay
abandoned on the floor.
As he reached down to retrieve it
and pressed it to his lips,
he heard a soft footfall
outside the door.



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DECEMBER 14, 1992

COMMENT Term Extension 4
GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN 10
THE TALK OF THE TOWN 43
DEPARTMENTS
Our Far-Flung Correspondents Hunting with the Sheikhs . . . *Mary Anne Weaver* 51
How Arab royals spend millions in the pursuit of a rare bird.
Gifts for the House Baby, It's Cold Outside 65
A holiday shopping list for staying home in style.
A REPORTER AT LARGE Nixon's Last Cover-Up . . . . *Seymour M. Hersh* 76
The National Archives still holds four thousand hours of White House tapes, and the former President doesn't want them to be released.
STORYBOARD Christmas Off Fifth . . . . *Richard Cline* 82
ARTIST AT LARGE Buy the Right Thing . . . . *Art Spiegelman* 89
ARTIST'S NOTEBOOK A Consumer's Christmas . . . . *Stephanie Skalisky* 96
FICTION "Tiny in the Wilderness" . . . . *Tom Drury* 98
THE CRITICS
The Current Cinema
"Love Field" and "The Bodyguard" . . . . *Terrence Rafferty* 121
"A Few Good Men" . . . . *Michael Sragow* 123
Musical Events
Lammermoor Revisited . . . . *Paul Griffiths* 128
Books
From Our Pages 134
The Art Market: Going . . . Going . . . Gone . . . . *Calvin Tomkins* 136
Briefly Noted 139
POEMS
"The Country Road" . . . . *James Laughlin* 80
"Whistling in the Dark" . . . . *Eamon Grennan* 86
"Maybe All This" . . . . *Wislawa Szymborska* 94
SHOUTS AND MURMURS Brigs 7, Phoons 0 . . . . *James Stevenson* 140
COVER *Michael Witte*
DRAWINGS *Brian Savage, Charles Barsotti, William Hamilton, Ed Fisher, Bill Woodman, Robert Weber, Mike Twohy, Huguette Martel, Donald Reilly, Michael Crawford*

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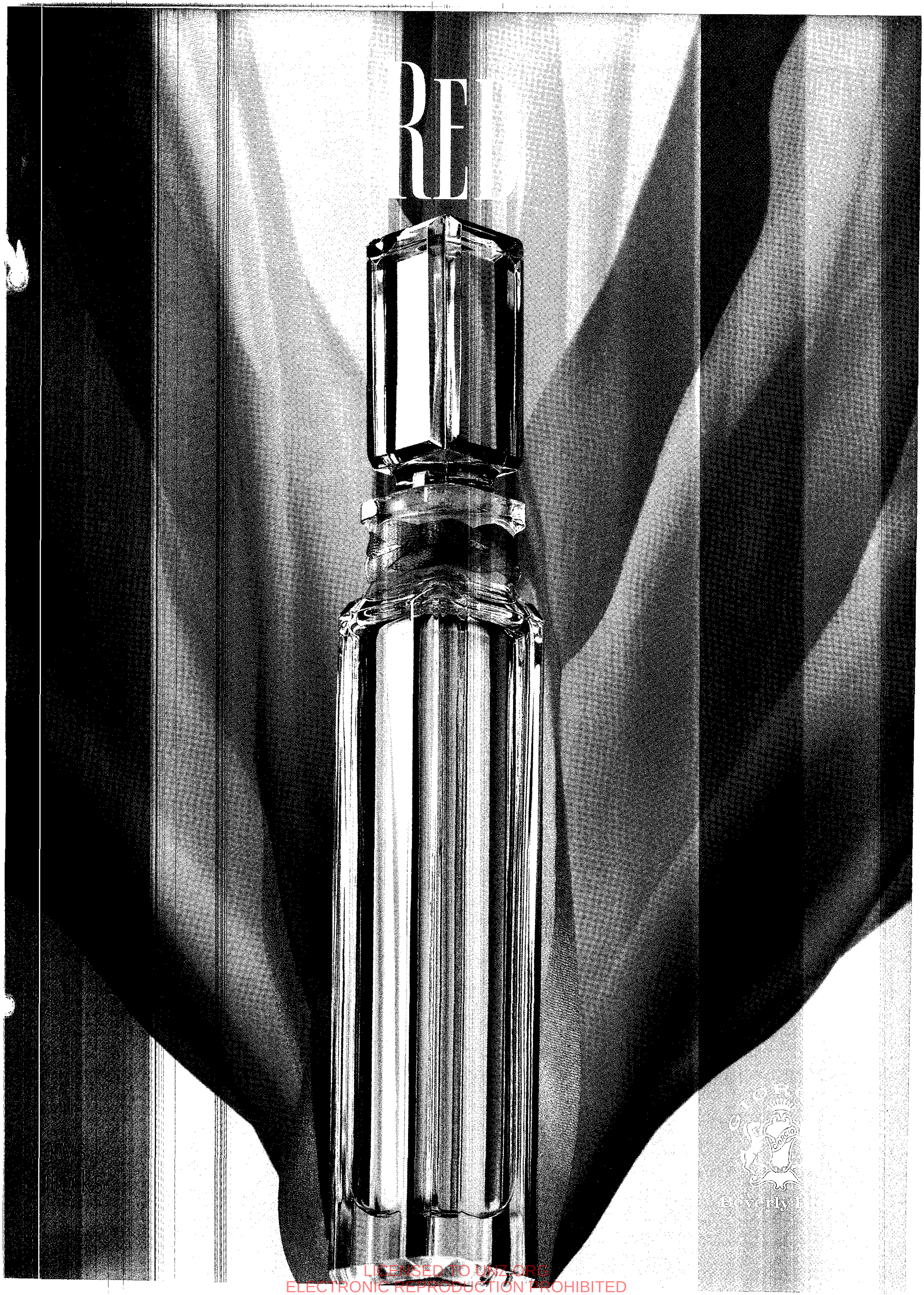
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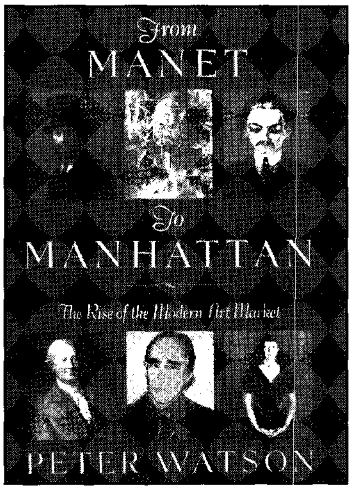

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Appendices. Bibliography.
Index.

RANDOM HOUSE

COMMENT

TERM EXTENSION

The post-election gloom of the nation's leading Republicans has yielded to a mood of orneriness akin to that of sports fans convinced that their team has lost the big game on a botched call. What put the President's supporters into this fevered state was a spurt of unexpectedly upbeat economic announcements, including the disclosure that the Bush Administration—even as it was scouring the globe for twenty-year-old evidence of Bill Clinton's unpatriotism—had underfigured the rate of economic growth for the third quarter of 1992, thus depriving the American people of the news that the "Bush recovery," as Marlin Fitzwater, the Presidential spokesman, called it, had been "coming on strong" as far back as July. Some of the President's fiercer partisans almost seemed to say that the election itself had been a kind of statistical error.

How much of a recovery the nation is experiencing is still uncertain, and whether a small adjustment in its timing could have made the difference for President Bush seems doubtful. That Presidential elections have often been decided by transitory economic trends, however, is abundantly clear. In 1960, as in 1992, the country had entered a recession on the Republicans' watch, and the Administration insisted—correctly, it turned out—that the economy was basically in good shape. But the 1960 recession, brief as it was, fell at the worst possible moment for that year's Republican nominee. Richard Nixon, looking back on his defeat, was upset not only with fate but with President Eisenhower, who had turned down his request for a bit of quick pump priming, on the now quaint-sounding principle that Presidents should attend to the nation's underlying prosperity, not to every bump in the economy. In 1972, as an incumbent President seeking a second term, Nixon—not one to forget a lesson of this sort—set what may be a modern record for shamelessness in election-year economic manipulation.

The distinguishing characteristic of some of the most highly regarded Presidents of recent years has been their sheer good luck in being around at the right moment, economically speak-

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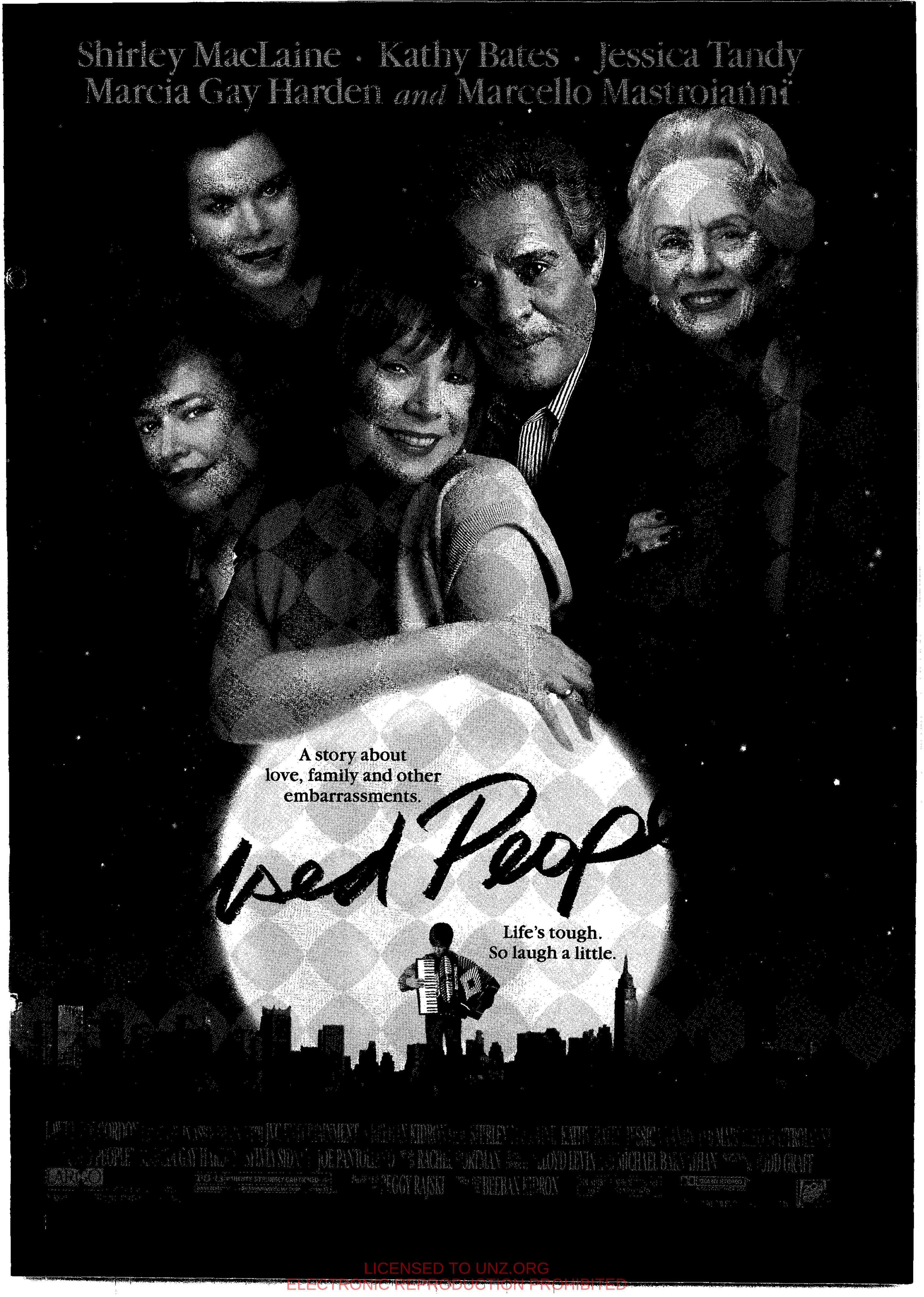Shirley MacLaine · Kathy Bates · Jessica Tandy
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Life's tough. So laugh a little.
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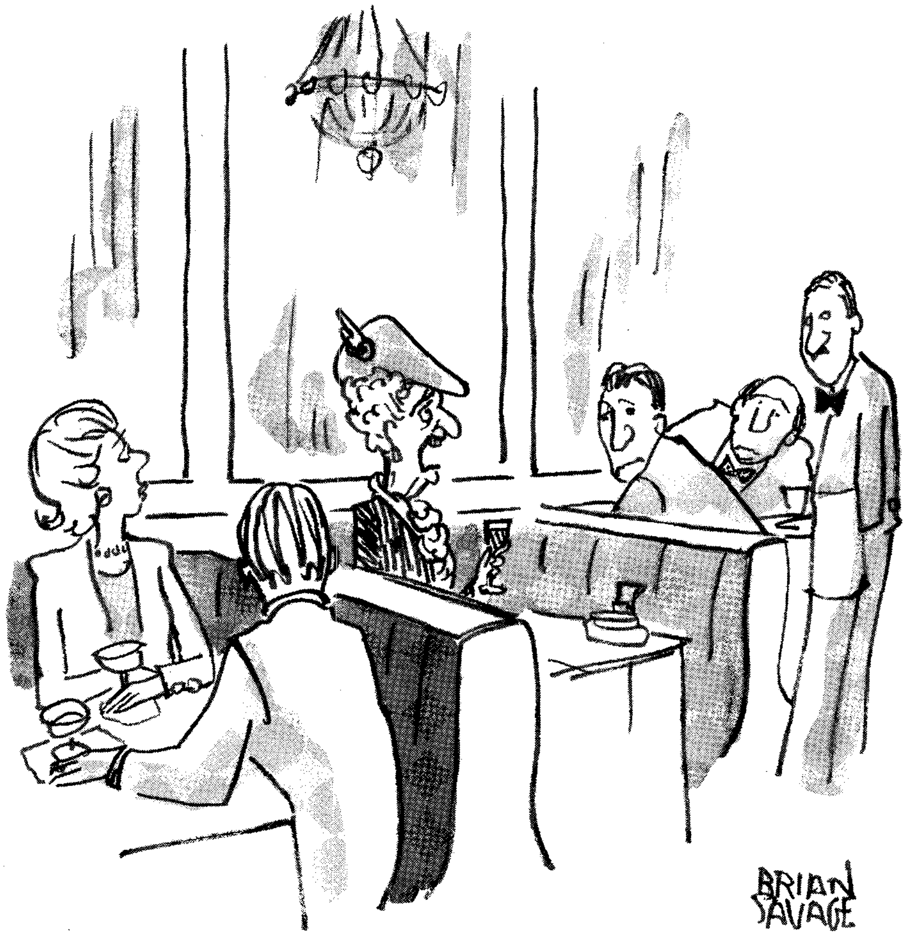

"Danforth, we hardly knew ye!"

• •

ing. Often they have cashed in on the economic policies of their predecessors. In 1964, when Americans gave a landslide victory to Lyndon Johnson, they were in no small measure applauding a long postwar economic boom that was then reaching its apex. The guns-and-butter policies of Johnson and Nixon, on the other hand, fed the high inflation of the late seventies, which helped make Jimmy Carter a one-term President. And it was under Carter that the Federal Reserve Board began to take the painful steps that would bring inflation under control—in time for Ronald Reagan to reap the political reward in 1984.

The election of 1992 stands out, in this context, as a comparatively rare case in which the state of the economy could fairly be laid at the door of the candidate of the party actually holding the White House; he and his policies had been around long enough—twelve years—for their results to be apparent. But the Bush supporters' complaint, if it's ill-applied to themselves, addresses a worrisome fact of American political life: the close link between election results and the state of the election-year economy. (To hear some election scholars tell it, the connection is so strong that we might as well save ourselves the trouble and expense of voting for President, and let a panel of economic statisticians crunch out the result for us.)

Since the election, Bill Clinton and his advisers have been busy fashioning a legislative program with which they hope to slay the monster of gridlock. While they're at it, perhaps they should give some thought to another monster: the four-year election cycle. In the absence of an international crisis, we Americans tend to exalt our Presidents when the economy looks good and to ridicule them when it looks bad. And after a year or so in office Presidents tend to cast aside their originally stated priorities in a mad, non-ideological effort to time recessions right and conclude the term in high gear. The incumbent's philosophy thus becomes, to paraphrase Mr. Micawber, "4.6 per cent growth, happiness; 2.9, misery."

Mr. Clinton will undoubtedly be tempted to think that the way to avoid George Bush's fate is to do a more artful job of micromanagement. But it might be better for the country, and for Mr. Clinton, if he decided to let the short term take care of itself—as it often does, with or without Presidential permission. As a candidate, Mr. Clinton, to his credit, stressed the need for measures—involving education, infrastructure, research and development, and welfare, among other issues—that common sense suggests cannot yield anything like their full results in the space of four, or even eight, years. Some of these proposals, if pursued with any daring, could well entail rocky periods of adjustment in the short term. Yet the President-elect has not said how he intends to maintain such policies without disappointing or angering an electorate that, come reëlection time, is likely to examine its material well-being and vote accordingly. It is an article of faith among Democrats these days that the prosperity on which the Republican victories of 1984 and 1988 were founded was an illusion. But if 1984 was a poor guide, statistically, to the soundness of Mr. Reagan's policies, why should 1996 be any better as a measure of the soundness of Mr. Clinton's?

With his talk of long-term investment and, since the election, his cautions against expecting "overnight" results, Mr. Clinton has hinted at an awareness of these difficulties. If the investments he has called for make sense, then it is important not merely to appropriate money for them but to appropriate time and voice to a continuing campaign aimed at convincing the public that the real fruits will be seen over decades and generations. Only then might the innovations of the Clinton Administration become—as the great foreign-policy commitments of the Cold War became, and as the great social entitlements of the thirties and the sixties have become—a bedrock of national, even bipartisan, policy. And only then might the electorate be persuaded to consider, in four years' time, some wiser questions than "Are you better off now than you were four years ago?" ♦

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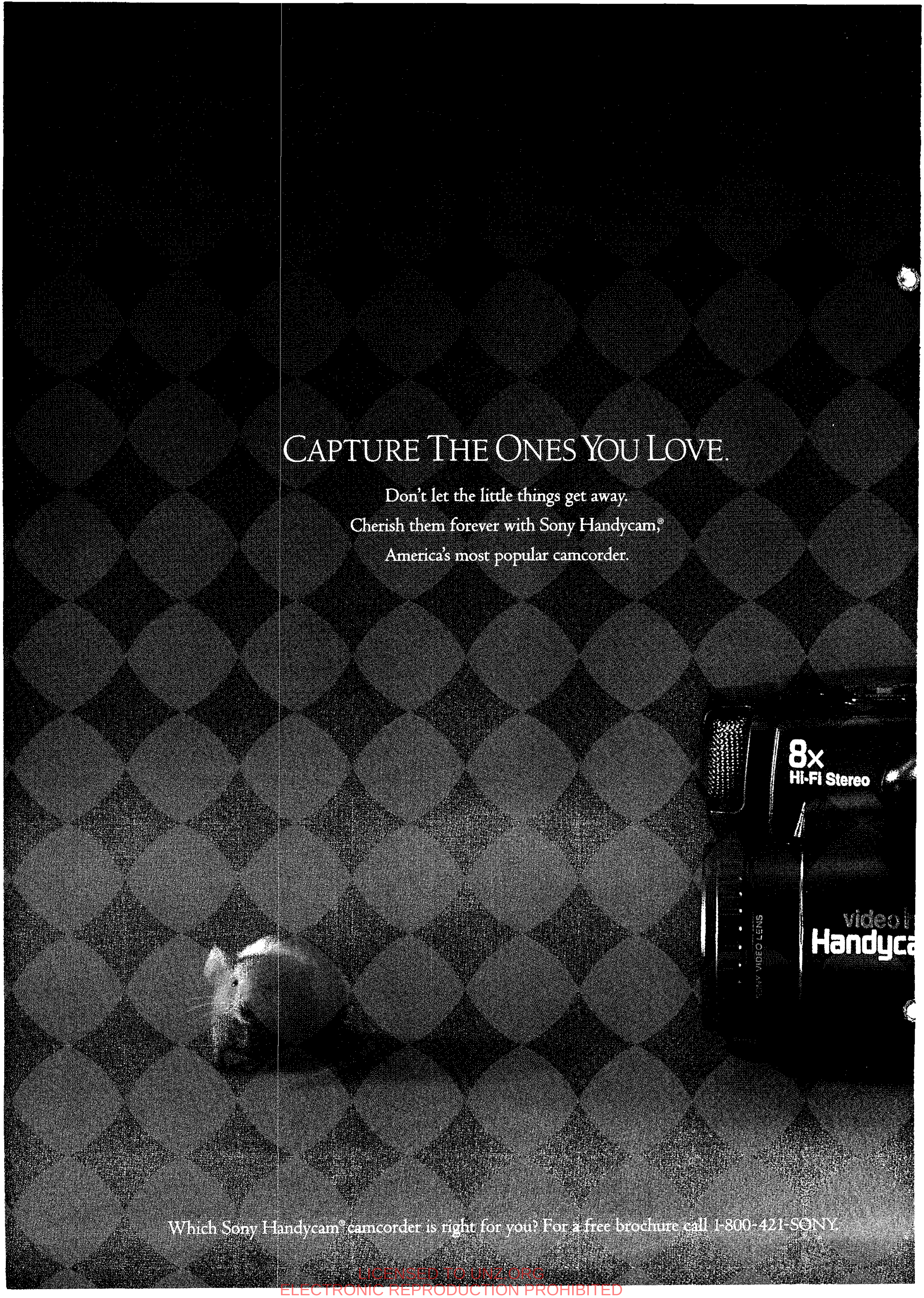
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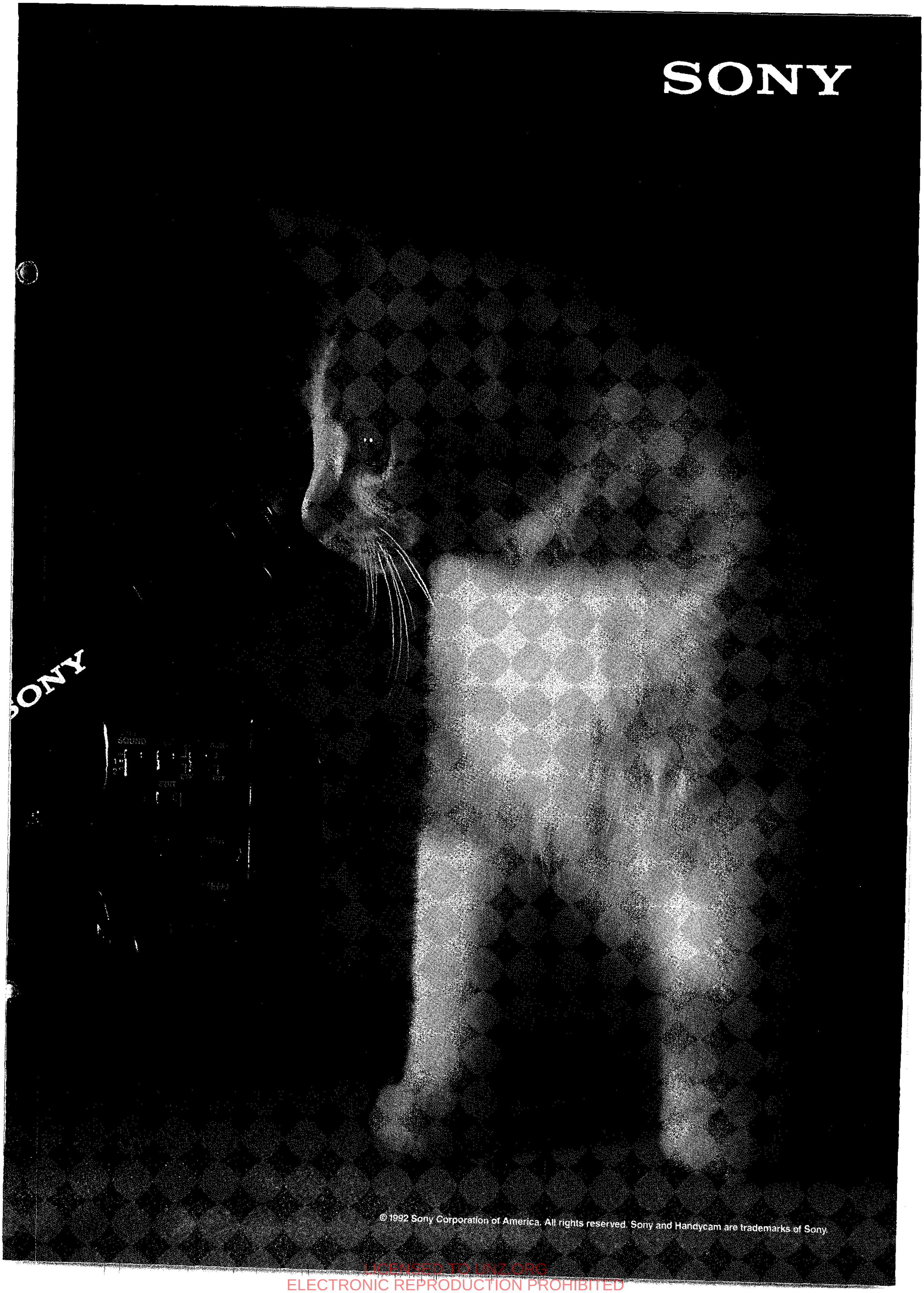

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16			

THE THEATRE

Anything Goes

"No Shame," now running unchecked at the Public, bills itself as "a weekly assault on good taste." Just what this means was amply demonstrated at the show's thirty-eighth permutation, on a recent Saturday: Bonnie Wiseman, something of a testy, grown-up Madeline with white gloves and a red rubber nose, roller-skated as she lobbed Ping-Pong balls at the audience. Then the deferential Doug Skinner, strumming a ukulele, sang happily of his desire to be an alien, and Gene Poole, clad in a shaggy carapace of aluminum cans, spun around on a unicycle. Periodically, the Late Bloomers—two lovelies in ball gowns, tiaras, and sneakers—reset the stage.

Credit for all of this ultimately goes to Randy Rollison, artistic director of HOME for Contemporary Theatre and Art. Rollison imported "No Shame" from the University of Iowa Playwrights' Festival, where performances were given in the back of a truck, with motorcycle headlights providing the illumination. The Iowa version, Rollison remembers, was somewhat "raw," and, true to form, its New York incarnation has some rough edges: at one point, Ms. Wiseman concocts a fruit salad largely by chewing up the ingredients. Still, as the abundant laughter shows, attempts are clearly being made to uphold minimum standards of decorum. "No Shame," Rollison insists, doesn't necessarily mean "No Pride."

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

A Christmas Carol—Patrick Stewart returns to Broadway with his one-man staging of the Dickens classic. Performances begin Dec. 15 and continue through Jan. 3. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

My Favorite Year—A new musical, based on the movie of the same name, by Joseph Dougherty, Stephen Flaherty, and Lynn Ahrens. Evan Pappas, Tim Curry, and Lainie Kazan have the leads. Previews Dec. 8-9 Opens Dec. 10 at 6:30. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

Orpheus in Love—A comic opera-theatre piece with words by Craig Lucas and music by Gerald Busby. Previews through Dec. 14. Opens Dec. 15 at 8. (Circle Repertory Company, 99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100.)

Wilder, Wilder, Wilder—Three by Thornton—The Willow Cabin Theatre Company presents Thornton Wilder's "The Long Christmas Dinner," "The Happy Journey," and "Pullman Car Hiawatha." Opens Dec. 7 at 8, and runs through Dec. 28. (Harold Clurman, 412 W. 42nd St. For reservations, call 886-1889.)

OPENED RECENTLY

A . . . My Name Is Still Alice—A sequel to the 1984 musical revue "A . . . My Name Is Alice." Conceived and directed by Joan Micklin Silver and Julianne Boyd. (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103.)

A Backer's Audition—A new musical by Douglas Bernstein and Denis Markell. (American Jewish Theatre, 307 W. 26th St. 633-9797. Closes Dec. 20.)

Brother Truckers—Murder and mayhem from the Ridiculous Theatrical Company, which, at its best (as it is here), gives excess a good name. Everett Quinton, who plays a rich bitch, and Elizabeth Fried, who is Quinton's real-life costumier, are chiefly responsible for the evening's success. The playwright is Georg Osterman. (Charles Ludlam Theatre, 1 Sheridan Sq. 691-2271.)

Bubbe Meises, Bubbe Stories—A musical in which a granddaughter recalls her grandmothers and their stories. Written by, and starring, Ellen Gould. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020.)

CBS Live—"I Love Lucy" and "The Honeymooners" episodes, in a format that uses both live actors and videotape. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 279-4200.)

Conversations with My Father—If you're looking for a totally satisfying theatrical experience, try Herb Gardner's bittersweet memory play about a Lower East Side barkeep, his two sons, and the patrons of his tavern. The cast is led by the wonderful Judd Hirsch; Daniel Sullivan directed. (4/13/92) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

The Destiny of Me—A new play by Larry Kramer. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 239-6200.)

Falsettos—This back-to-back revival of "March of the Falsettos" and "Falsettoland," two of William Finn's three one-act musicals about a childish, self-absorbed man who leaves his wife and son for his not very nice male lover, is strictly for those who care. (5/11/92) (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Five Guys Named Moe—The guys are black dancers and singers of ability and spirit, who perform the songs (either lyrics or music or both) of the late Louis Jordan, among them "Don't Let the Sun Catch You Crying," "Ain't Nobody Here But Us Chickens," and "Is You Is or Is You Ain't My Baby?" This London import makes a merry evening. (4/20/92) (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 239-6200.)

Guys and Dolls—A lively production of Frank Loesser's perfect musical, under the direction of Jerry Zaks. Faith Prince, Josie de Guzman, Adam Arkin, and Tom Wopat are the leading dolls and guys, and Tony Walton designed the stunning scenery. (4/27/92) (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Gypsy Passion—Eighteen Spanish dancers, singers, and musicians in the return engagement of a flamenco revue that played New York briefly in the spring. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Hello Muddah, Hello Fadduh—A musical based on the song parodies of Allan Sherman. It was conceived and written by Douglas Bernstein and Rob Krausz. (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330.)

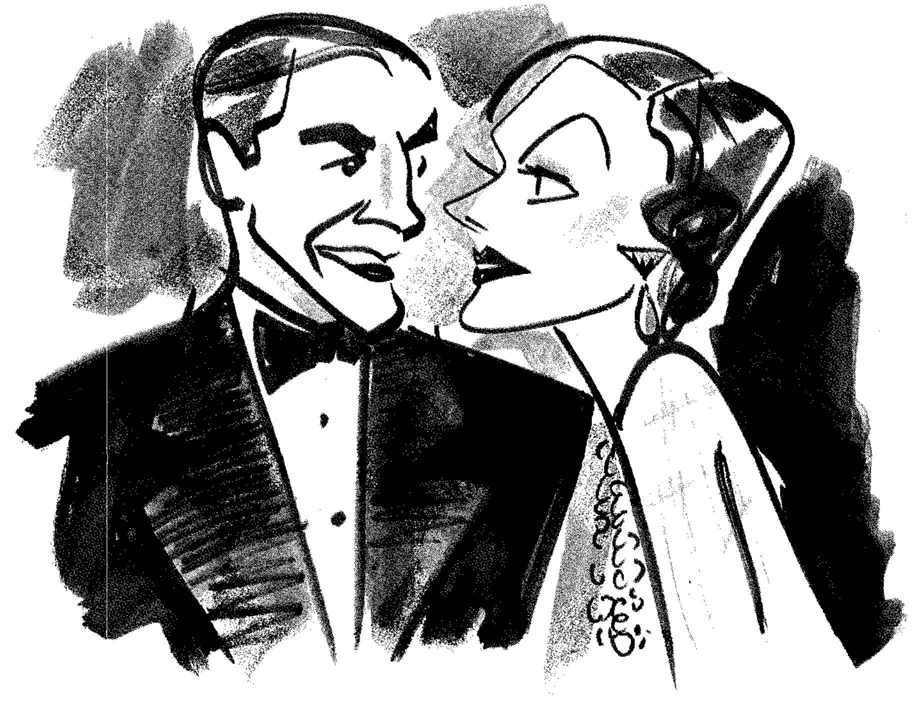
Jelly's Last Jam—The music of Jelly Roll Morton, self-proclaimed inventor of jazz, and, at the same time, an unsparing delineation of Morton himself. The show, an original if there ever was one, was written and directed by George C. Wolfe. In the starring role, Gregory Hines combines his astonishing talents as tap dancer and actor; Savion Glover, who plays the character as a young man, is worthy of him, which is saying a lot. Also present are Keith David, Tonya Pinkins, Wayne Mathis, and Mary Bond Davis. (5/11/92) (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200.)

Joined at the Head—Ellen Parker gives a lovely performance in this rather touching play about a successful novelist on tour in Boston who meets and becomes friends again with her high-school boyfriend and his dying wife. Kevin O'Rourke is the boyfriend and Catherine Butterfield, who wrote the play, is the wife. Pamela Berlin was the director. (12/7/92) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212. Closes Dec. 20.)

Lake Street Extension—The New York première of a 1991 play by Lee Blessing, presented by the Signature Theatre Company. (Kampo Cultural Center, 31 Bond St. 279-4200. Closes Dec. 20.)

My Ancestors' House—A play by Bina Sharif, featuring Madhur Jaffrey. (Theatre for the New City, 155 First Ave., at 10th St. 254-1109. Closes Dec. 20.)

The Night Larry Kramer Kissed Me—A series of vignettes, by the rising writer/performer David Drake, about gay life in the age of AIDS. Mr.



Michael Zaslow and Jane Summerhays in "Noël and Gertie"

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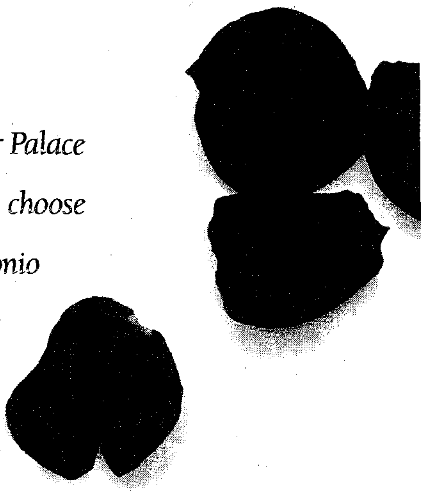

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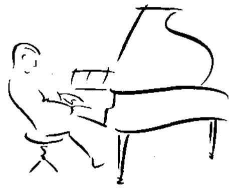

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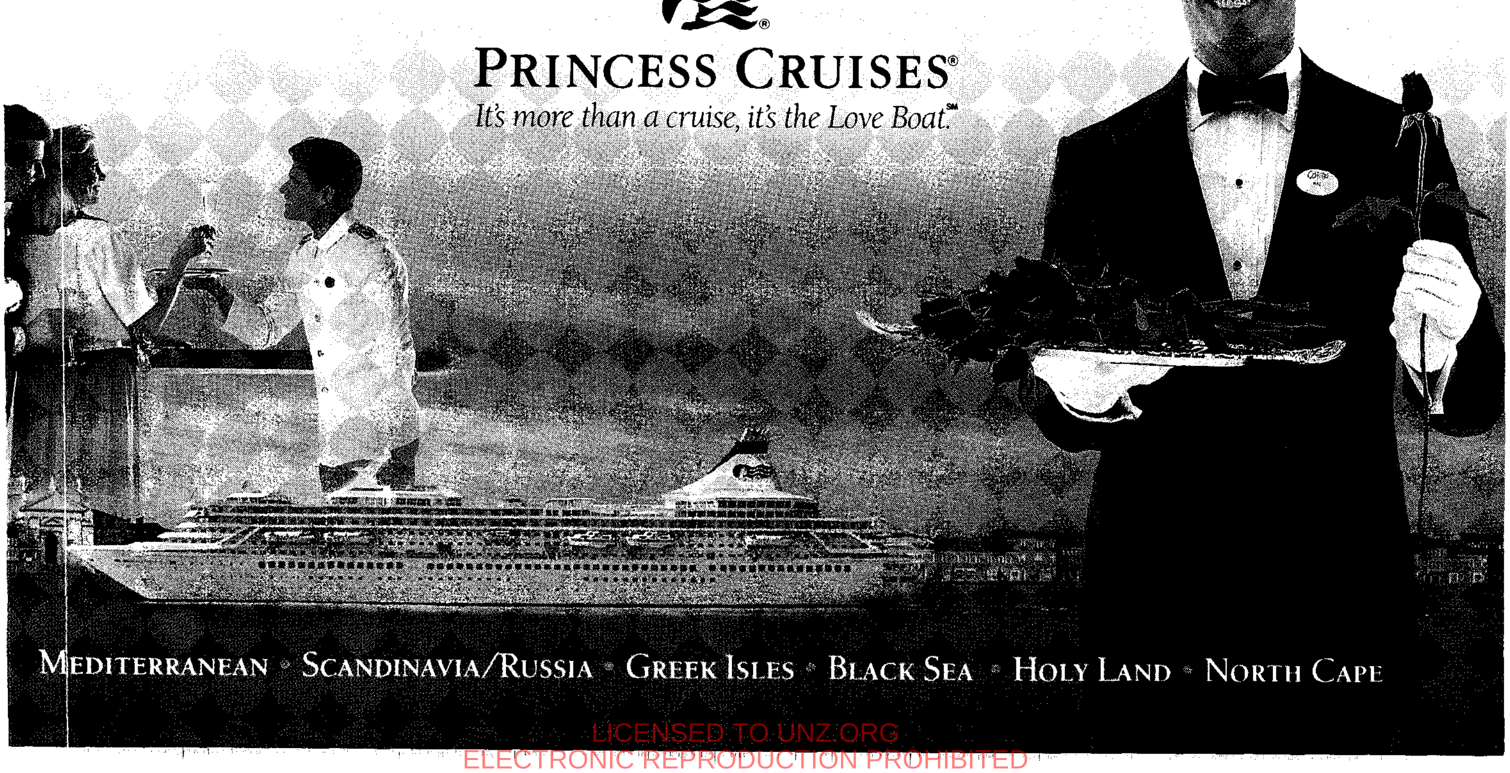


MEDITERRANEAN • SCANDINAVIA/RUSSIA • GREEK ISLES • BLACK SEA • HOLY LAND • NORTH CAPE

Drake is more gifted as a performer than as a writer, but his show is frequently absorbing—by turns silly and poignant. (Perry Street Theatre, 31 Perry St. 564-8038.)

Noël and Gertie—The York Theatre Company presents a show about Noël Coward and Gertrude Lawrence devised by British drama critic Sheridan Morley. (Theatre at St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Closes Dec. 20. For information about tickets, call 534-5366.)

No Shame—A late-night performance series, which plays Saturdays at 10:30. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

Oleanna—David Mamet, in fine, curmudgeonly form, takes on political correctness, sexual harassment, and a number of other isms in this brief, powerful drama that continues to stir up the ideologues. Rebecca Pidgeon and William H. Macy lend articulate support to a play whose skepticism is as evenhanded as it is corrosive. Not to be missed. (11/16/92) (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 307-4100.)

On the Bum—A comedy by Neal Bell. (12/7/92) (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Closes Dec. 13.)

Othello—Clinton Turner Davis has directed this production of Shakespeare's play, which features Raphael Nash in the title role. (Pearl, 125 W. 22nd St. 645-7708. Closes Dec. 19.)

Program for Murder—A thriller by George W. George and Jeff Travers. (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200.)

Remembrance—Set in Belfast, Graham Reid's absorbing and often entertaining play tells the story of a Protestant man and a Catholic woman—both of them widowed and in their sixties—who slowly fall in love. They are both beset by grown children who, in different ways, raise hell. Milo O'Shea and Frances Sternhagen can seldom have been better than they are in the leading roles. (10/12/92) (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 967-9077.)

The Seagull—Chekhov's play launches the second season of the National Actors Theatre. With Tyne Daly, Jon Voight, Laura Linney, and Ethan Hawke. (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6280.)

The Sheik of Avenue B—A Jewish ragtime and jazz-era music-and-comedy revue conceived and written by Isaiah Sheffer. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824.)

The Show-Off—George Kelly's beguiling, irresistible comedy, about a young braggart who woos and wins the daughter of a North Philadelphia family, has been given a splendid revival by the Roundabout, under the canny direction of Brian Murray. First produced in 1924, the play is still fresh as paint. Boyd Gaines, tall and skinny and unable to leave any mirror unglimpsed, is the flamboyant hero, and Pat Carroll, as his mother-in-law, is his toughest antagonist, with a repertoire of some of the funniest lines a character has ever been awarded. Both leads are very good, and they are well supported by Laura Esterman, Sophie Hayden, and Tim DeKay, among others. (11/16/92) (Criterion Center, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400. Closes Dec. 13.)

The Sisters Rosensweig—Wendy Wasserstein's new play, a comedy with serious undertones, is about the reunion in London of three American Jewish sisters—an international banker, a travel writer, and a wife and mother who's a professional dispenser of advice. They are portrayed by Jane Alexander, Frances McDormand, and Madeline Kahn, each of whom proves worthy (and then some) of her role. The spirit of Chekhov hovers but never intrudes. Laughter is continuous. (11/2/92) (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

Someone Who'll Watch Over Me—Alec McCowen, James McDaniel, and Stephen Rea portray three hostages in Beirut, in a drama by the Irish playwright Frank McGuinness. (12/7/92) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Spic-O-Rama—Six well-written characters who have found not only their author but also their performer in John Leguizamo's scintillating and scathing one-man show about Latino life in the Big City. Leguizamo is vivacious, inventive, and very, very funny. The show is original and scenically ingenious. (11/9/92) (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

Times Square Angel—Charles Busch's "hard-boiled Christmas fantasy." (Theatre for the New City, 155 First Ave., at 10th St. 254-1109. Closes Dec. 20.)

Words Divine—The Mexican actress Ofelia Medina stars in an English-language adaptation, by Lorenzo Mans, of a 1920 play by the Spanish author Ramón del Valle-Inclán. Max Ferra was the director. (INTAR, 420 W. 42nd St. 695-6551. Closes Dec. 13.)

Woyzeck—Jesse Borrego has the title role in a production of Georg Büchner's play, directed by JoAnne Akalaitis. With music by Philip Glass and a translation by Henry J. Schmidt. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

LONG RUNS

BEAU JEST: Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. . . . **BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **CATS:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **CATSKILLS ON BROADWAY:** Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4100. . . . **CRAZY FOR YOU:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY:** The show's holiday edition, "Forbidden Christmas," runs through Dec. 27. (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.). . . **FOREVER PLAID:** Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400. . . . **LOST IN YONKERS:** Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211. . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **MISS SAIGON:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **NUNSENSE:** Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. . . . **PERFECT CRIME:** Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 695-3401. . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE SECRET GARDEN:** St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING:** St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 279-4200. . . . **THE WILL ROGERS FOLLIES:** Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 730-8200.

DANCE

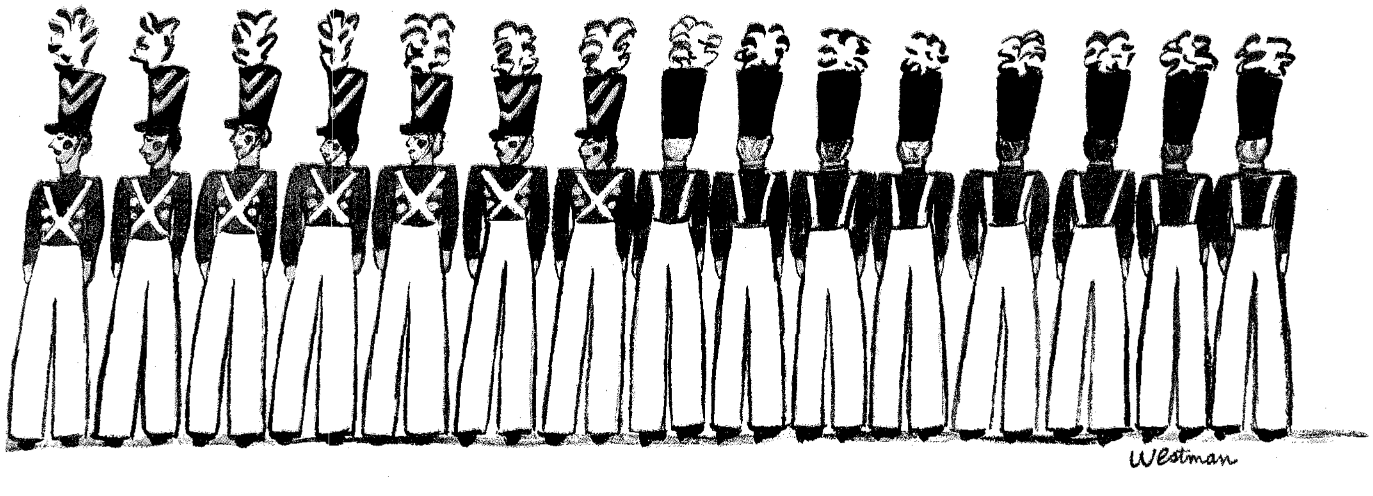
Visions of Sugarplums

When Allegra Kent performs the role of Frau Stahlbaum, the hostess of the Christmas party, in Balanchine's "Nutcracker," she really gets into the act—like a mother at a children's birthday party, say, who is so anxious for the kids to have a good time that she practically becomes a kid herself. She seizes this tiny part and fills it with life. "I play it like Countess Tolstoy," she said recently. "Several years ago, I read Troyat's biography of Tolstoy, and it spoke about how his wife was so busy managing the estate that she was always jumping over fences."

Ms. Kent is the director of the Stamford City Ballet School, in Stamford, Connecticut, and every year she reprises her impersonation of the countess for the school's annual production of "The Nutcracker," at the Palace Theatre. The staging, by David Richardson, is the full Balanchine version, with Orchestra New England providing live music in the pit. The children in the cast are drawn from the school, and the adult dancers come from the New York City Ballet (with which Ms. Kent was a principal dancer from 1956 to 1983) and the School of American Ballet. This year (December *12-13 and December 18-20), the guest* artists are Darci Kistler, Nikolaj Hübbe, Margaret Tracey, Damian Woetzel, Nichol Hlinka, Katrina Killian, Nilas Martins, Rachel Rutherford, and Christina Gibbs. (Call 1-203 325-4466 for information.)

New York City Ballet—Presenting "The Nutcracker," through Jan. 3. (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Dec. 8-10 and Dec. 15-16 at 6; Dec. 11 at 8; Dec. 12 at 2 and 8; and Dec. 13 at 1 and 5. The season continues through Feb. 21.)

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre—In an engagement that will run through Jan. 3. Dec. 9 at 8: "District Storyville," "The River," and "Revelations.". . . ¶ Dec. 10 at 7: "Dance at the Gym," "The Winter in Lisbon" (première), and "Revelations.". . . ¶ Dec. 11 at 8: "Blues Suite," "Cry," "The River," and "The Winter in Lisbon.". . . ¶ Dec. 12 at 2: "Streams," "Treading," "The River," and "The Winter in Lisbon.". . . ¶ Dec. 12 at 8: "Memoria," "Night Creature," "The



BARBARA WESTMAN

Dr. Earle inside the JIM diving suit, descending to 1,250 feet.

[illegible] could see the ocean from the viewpoint of the fish."

Dr. Sylvia Earle

"People protect what they love," says Dr. Earle. "If people get to know the ocean and the wonderful creatures that live there, they are more likely to care—and save the seas."

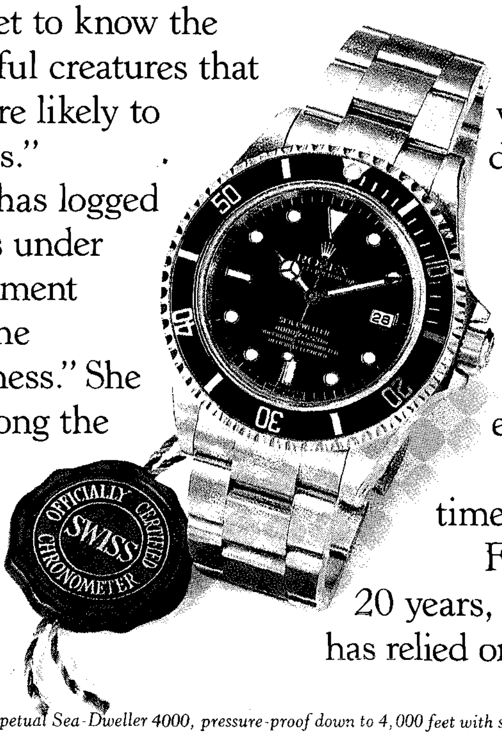
Dr. Sylvia A. Earle has logged more than 5,000 hours under the sea, an accomplishment that has earned her the nickname "Her Deepness." She explains, "Walking along the ocean floor, 1,250 feet below the surface, cruising solo at night in a minisubmarine 3,000 feet down, or exploring a reef in three feet of water—the joy of discovery is there. I never cease to marvel at the delightful personalities of fish, squid, and even small crabs."

It was her intense love of the sea that prompted Dr. Earle to begin writing and lecturing on undersea conservation. "With knowing comes caring," she says. "It is clear from viewing the oceans from the inside out—as well as from distant space—that this is an ocean planet. Climate, weather, and the very character of earth are shaped by the oceans. It is also home for most of the life on earth. Our lives and our well-being depend on taking care of the sea and its vital, living treasures."

To explore the vivid world beneath the ocean's surface, Dr. Earle needs equipment she can rely on. "For safe diving, a reliable timepiece is critical," she says.

For more than 20 years, Dr. Earle has relied on a Rolex.

Dr. Sylvia Earle



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THE KEY SWISS BANK

DANCE—Cont'd

Lark Ascending," "Opus McShann," "For 'Bird'—with Love," "A Song for You," "Blues Suite," "Cry," and "Revelations." . . ¶ Dec. 13 at 3: "Hidden Rites," "Dance at the Gym," and "District Storyville." . . ¶ Dec. 13 at 7:30: "Dance at the Gym," "The Winter in Lisbon," and "Revelations." . . ¶ Dec. 15 at 7: "Fontessa and Friends," "A Folk Dance" (première), and "The River." . . ¶ Dec. 16 at 8: "Memoria," "Shelter" (company première), and "The Winter in Lisbon." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

BALLET HISPANICO—Final performances of the engagement. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Dec. 8-11 at 8; Dec. 12 at 2 and 8; and Dec. 13 at 2 and 7:30.)

SUSAN MARSHALL & COMPANY—"Untitled (Detail)" (New York première), "Standing Duet" (première), and "Interior with Seven Figures." (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793. Dec. 10-12 at 8:30 and Dec. 13 at 3. Through Dec. 20.)

JANIS BRENNER & DANCERS—Presenting "Layers" (première), "Non-Sinatra Songs," and other works. (Merce Cunningham Studio, 55 Bethune St. Dec. 10-11 at 9 and Dec. 12-13 at 8. For reservations, call 924-0077.)

STEPHANIE SKURA & COMPANY—In "After She Squawks," a dance-music-performance piece. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. Dec. 10-13 at 9. Through Dec. 20.)

NIGHT LIFE

Kings' Row

WHEN it comes to honoring its own, popular music is surpassed by few fields of endeavor. This is a genre, after all, with several Kings and Queens, a Prince, a Duke, and plenty of would-be gods. Just now, New York is in the midst of a season of reverse pilgrimages, with the deities coming to the faithful. Bob Dylan was apotheosized during a recent tribute concert, and when country patriarch George Jones played Tramps a few weeks back—his first local visit in many years—the crowd was so transported that it didn't notice how perfunctory his set actually was. Soon, two more Olympians will descend: Little Richard (Tramps, December 8-10) and Johnny Cash (Ritz, December 16).

Little Richard's career has been well catalogued: founding father of rock and roll; purveyor of a wild, sexually charged performance style; seminal influence on the Beatles. He dropped out, at the height of his powers, to become a minister, but he's forged a second career, of sorts, out of keeping his legend alive.

Cash, who is also a product of the fifties, has enjoyed remarkable longevity. Since signing with Sun Records, in 1955, he's written about a thousand songs; earlier this year, Columbia released a three-CD retrospective. Cash has left his mark on everyone from Social Distortion, the L.A. punk band, to Bruce Springsteen, who seems to have written the material for "Nebraska" during a heavy Johnny Cash phase. The Boss must be an able student, because Cash covered a song from that record, "Highway Patrolman."

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out some of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and nightclub proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—**ANDREA MARCOVICCI** is currently at work in the woody nook known as the Oak Room. Beginning Dec. 8, she'll perform a show called, "I'll Be Seeing You," featuring songs from the Second World War. Shows at nine-thirty Tuesdays through Thursdays, and at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty (the late show is called "Just Kern") on Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

BALLROOM, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A cool green music hall that features a steady stream of international pop and cabaret stars, as well as the occasional drag queen. It's also a tapas restaurant—if you haven't had dinner, you may never make it to the show. William Bolcom's opera "Casino Paradise," featuring **ANDRÉ DE SHIELDS** through Dec. 13, continues a two-week run. **MELBA MOORE** will also perform her show, "Songs My Mother Taught Me," for a few more weeks. Show times vary.

BIRDLAND, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—An airy two-tiered space with pastel walls and potted greenery. The **GARY BARTZ** quartet, which features the fine pianist **JOHN HICKS,** will be here Dec. 11-12. Hicks will also play with a trio of his own later this month. Music from nine. Dining.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Jazz, mirrors, a gift shop, and, of course, those incredible shrinking aisles. **CHAKA KHAN,** who will be here Dec. 8-13, formed her first band at the age of eleven, then spent the late sixties in various dance outfits, working the Chicago circuit. In the seventies, Khan made half a dozen highly successful records with Rufus, and her first solo record, titled "Chaka," came out in 1978. Since then, the singer has continued to turn her rich, electrifying voice to everything from pop to soul to jazz. Jazz guitarist **RUSSELL MALONE** comes in on Dec. 14. The newly reunited **BRECKER BROTHERS** begin a week-long engagement on Dec. 15. First set at nine. Dining.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—An easy, comfortable place to take in a show. The Irish-born singer **MAURA O'CONNELL,** who has a lovely voice and who doesn't clutter her music with the pop-music conventions that one finds in a lot of crossover-minded folk these days, performs on Dec. 7, along with **DON HENRY. PAUL KELLY** and **RICH HALL** appear on Dec. 9, and on Dec. 10 the Bottom Line is home to a songwriters' bull session, including **TERRE ROCHE** and **JANE SIBERRY. JIMMY SCOTT** and **JOHN SIMON** share a bill Dec. 11-12. Scott's career has been marked by booze, bad marriages, and even worse record deals. In the late forties, he recorded his first hit, with the Lionel Hampton band; in the early eighties, he was working in shipping-and-receiving at a Sheraton in Cleveland. These days, however, the singer is at the top of his game. His gorgeous, sorrowful voice can be heard to fine advantage on his latest record, a collection of standards titled "All of Me." And his shows, including a two-night stand here in September, have been thick with admirers. Show times vary. Burgers, fries, and other things to make your heart beat faster.

BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—The art collection in this neighborhood restaurant, bar, and jazz club is a curator's worst nightmare. Fortunately, the musicians who gather round the Steinway each night are usually more harmonious. Pianist **JAMES WILLIAMS** and bassist **RAY DRUMMOND** are here through Dec. 9. The duo then picks up a few partners—saxophonist **BILLY PIERCE** and drummer **BILLY DRUMMOND**—and continues Dec. 10-12. Music from ten.

CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The pastel uptown spa known as the Café Carlyle is home to **BOBBY SHORT** Tuesdays through Saturdays at eight-forty-five and ten-forty-five. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in Bemelmans Bar, **RONNY WHYTE** is subbing for Barbara Carroll, who broke her knee not long ago. Music from nine-forty-five Tuesdays through Saturdays.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—Rock and roll always sounds best in a dump, which may be why this legendary club is still thriving: the management has had the good sense not to renovate. Fossil is here on Dec. 8; Flotsam and Jetsam turn up on Dec. 9; Maria X Communikata appears on Dec. 11; and Flaming Lips are in residence on Dec. 12. Music from eight on Sundays and Mondays, from eight-thirty Tuesdays through Thursdays, and from nine-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays.

EAGLE TAVERN, 355 W. 14th St. (924-0275)—Where swordfish leap on almost every wall. Where a cat with black and white spots sometimes walks the length of the bar. Where barbirds stare at football on the tube. And where, on Fridays, between the Sinatra and Streisand songs that emanate from the jukebox, one can often hear snatches of Irish music floating in from the bright back room. Fiona Doherty and Geraldine McNamara come in on Dec. 11. Sets at nine and ten-thirty.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—The seating arrangement in this long, narrow, red-velvet-and-mirror-walled basement makes flying coach seem roomy; nevertheless, it's one of the city's top jazz spots—thanks largely to the club's talent bookers. **MOSE ALLISON** is in action Dec. 8-13; **SCOTT HAMILTON** commences work on Dec. 15. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL** leads a trio. Music from eight. Dining.

FEZ, 380 Lafayette St., at Great Jones St. (533-7000)—This two-floor enterprise is reached by passing through Time Café, whose owners run the place. Upstairs is a sumptous Moroccan bar and lounge appointed with satin couches, mosaic tables, and Arabic-style fixtures. The downstairs room, where bands perform, is rather plain by comparison, but still a sleek and comfortable spot to take in a show. The **MINGUS BIG BAND** packs them in every Thursday. The fourteen-piece ensemble, directed by tenor saxophonist **CRAIG HANDY** and alto saxophonist **ALEX FOSTER,** concentrates exclusively on the tricky, cacophonous work of its catalyst, Charles Mingus. Prophetz of Rage and Black Tie share a bill with others on Dec. 11-12. Shows at nine and eleven. Dining.

J'S, 2581 Broadway, at 97th St. (666-3600)—An Upper West Side jazz room, one steep flight up from the hurly-burly. Jazz people are on the premises nightly. On Dec. 14, pianist **DAVE MC KENNA** and singer **DARYL SHERMAN** are here. McKenna is a fine musician who rarely plays in town these days. A remarkably hard-swinging pianist, he likes to set up a strong, walking bass figure with his left hand while his right whips off graceful bebop lines and rhythmic chord runs. Whatever tempo he's working in, his playing is always inventive and lyrical. Music from eight-thirty Sundays through Thursdays, and from nine Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

KNITTING FACTORY, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—A frat house for the avant-garde. The **THROWING MUSES** appear on Dec. 8-9. The Muses, who are led by singer-songwriter Kristin Hersh, started out in the mid-eighties with some jagged and brilliant guitar pop, the best of which can be heard on the band's self-titled début. Since then, the Muses have lost a few members—most notably, guitarist and sometime singer Tanya Donelly. Donelly played with the Breeders, then launched Belly, a first-rate group whose first album is due out this winter. In the meantime, the Muses' records have become increasingly spotty. Hersh has sloughed off her adolescent angst, which is too bad in a way, because it gave the band's music a real sense of drama and purpose. The Muses are a duo now—the other half of the team

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NIGHT LIFE—Cont'd

is drummer David Narcizo—and they sound somewhat lost, as if they can't decide whether to toe the alternative-rock line or to try to make some money. Music usually after nine.

Maxwell's, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken. (1-201 798-4064)—Many of the bands that play here today will be playing somewhere more expensive tomorrow. The **ROYAL CRESCENT MOB** and the **DROVERS** are here Dec. 10. Show times vary.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—Intimate nineties glitter. The performers, with their backs to the window, have to compete with a view of the Hudson, the George Washington Bridge, and beyond. A Jule Styne revue is currently under way. The show, the fifth in this cabaret's well-received series of composer tributes, features **GREGG EDELMAN, DAVID GARRISON, JAY LEONHART,** and **KAY MC CLELLAND.** Styne, who turns eighty-seven on New Year's Eve, has an imposing list of stage and screen successes, including "Gypsy," "Funny Girl," "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes," and on and on. He's still at it, too: besides having a new musical in the works, he served as creative consultant for this event. Shows at eight and ten-thirty. Dining. Closed Mondays.

"The Hard Nut" at the Next Wave Festival

Red Blazer Too, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—A place where a fella and a gal can put on the feedbag, get a little tight, and cut a rug. Mondays belong to the Smith Street Jazz Society, Tuesdays and Fridays to **VINCE GIORDANO AND THE NIGHTHAWKS,** Thursdays to Stan Rubin's big band, and Saturdays to Bob Cantwell and His Stompers. Rick Hardeman and his Basin Street Six will be in on Dec. 9. Show times vary.

Ritz, 254 W. 54th St. (541-8900)—One of the city's biggest, oldest, and loudest rock clubs. **JOHNNY WINTER** and **EDGAR WINTER** are here on Dec. 11. **JOHNNY CASH** and the **CARTER FAMILY** claim Dec. 16. Show times vary.

Russian Tea Room, 150 W. 57th St. (265-0947)—It's birthday week for Noël Coward, who will be thrice toasted on Dec. 13 in this intimate upstairs room-without-a-view. The playwright-and-songwriter's languid sophistication will be entrusted to **STEVE ROSS** (singing and playing) and **SHERIDAN MORLEY** (reminiscing). Shows at five-thirty, eight, and ten-thirty. Dining and, of course, drinking.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A pretty serious jazz shrine. The **JOHN SCOFIELD** quartet is in swing through Dec. 13. The **ENJA ALL-STARS,** featuring Willie Williams, Michael Formanek, Gust William Tsilis, Uri Caine, and Cecil Brooks III, begin work on Dec. 15. An electrified big band belonging to trumpeter **MILES EVANS** is in action on Mondays. Tee-off time is nine. Dining.

Tramps, 45 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—A broad, spacious, and agreeable club, where sight lines are above average. **LITTLE RICHARD** performs Dec. 8-10. Dec. 12 belongs to **LEON REDBONE.** Music from eight on weeknights and from eight-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The late Max Gordon, who opened this holiest of jazz shrines in 1935, once described the club's early patrons as a mix of "poets, W.P.A. writers, hustlers, broads on the make, and moochers." The **JACKIE MC LEAN** sextet holds forth Dec. 8-13. **BENNY GREEN'S** trio gets under way on Dec. 15. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays. Music after nine-thirty.

Wetlands, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—Usually thought of as a Deadhead hangout, the club has also been the launching pad for a generation of young New York bands like Blues Traveler and the Spin Doctors. Shows here can be absurdly sweaty and tight, and it can be hard to get a view of the stage. Still, there's always some mellow corner to retire to. A Diesel Only showcase, with the World Famous Blue Jays, Go to Blazes, Angel Dean, and the Zephyrs, takes place on Dec. 9. The label's bands (which also include the Blue Chieftains and Mumbo Gumbo) are all regulars on the city's shot-and-beer-joint circuit—places like Nightingales, Continental, and the Ludlow Street Café. The groups' common thread is a passion for country music, in many cases crossbred with rock or punk. Diesel Only and another independent label recently released a compilation of singles by these bands, called "Rig Rock Jukebox." Shows from ten.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—The food is Italian, the atmosphere is pastels and soft lights, and the musicians, who set up in a room between the bar and the dining room, are first-rate. The schedule: **TERI THORNTON** Dec. 7-9; the **ROY MERIWETHER** trio Dec. 10-12; the **LENORA HELM** duo on Dec. 13; and **JUNIOR MANCE, PAUL WEST,** and **JOE TEMPERLEY** beginning Dec. 14. Music from eight every night but Sunday, when sets begin at seven-thirty.

EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

Now that New York has a two-step bar, the hardest thing locals have to learn is not the dance but the etiquette. The unwritten rule at Do-Dah's (20 West 20th Street)—and at every other two-step bar on God's Little Acre—is that you never refuse to dance with anyone who asks you. Anyone. One Do-Dah night, right after work, an attractive but bookish and uncostumed young man walked up to a fringe-and-bleached-denim-bedecked woman radiating an I'm-so-hot-you-better-have-oven-mitts-on attitude and proposed taking her for a spin. She looked around to see if anyone was watching, saw that there were no witnesses, and said no. The young man, caught off guard by her rudeness, did not move. She flashed a too-bad smile. A much handsomer man came between them and asked her to dance. She accepted, leading him onto the floor as if she were Debra Winger about to ride the mechanical bull. Handsome he may have been, but what a lousy dancer! Suddenly, from behind, came a whirlwind, a couple swooping by with speed and precision and hilarity, just about blowing the Tony Lama boots off everyone they passed. On the couple's first sweep round, she caught only the woman's face; she saw his on the second. The bookworm had "That'll teach ya" written all over him. He yelled "Ya-hoo!" just to make sure she'd read it.

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

Next Wave Festival—Dec. 8 and Dec. 10-12 at 8: Robert Lepage's "Needles & Opium," a theatre work about Jean Cocteau and Miles Davis. . . . ¶ Dec. 11-12 and Dec. 15-16 at 7 and Dec. 13 at 1: The United States première of "The Hard Nut," Mark Morris's adaptation of "The Nutcracker." Through Dec. 27. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100.)

"The Mysteries and What's So Funny?"—David Gordon's work about life and art, with music by Philip Glass and sets by Red Grooms. Performed by Mr. Gordon's Pick Up Company. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Dec. 15-16 at 8. Through Jan. 3.)

Radio City Christmas Spectacular—The sixtieth-anniversary edition of the holiday show includes the Rockettes, of course. (Sixth Ave. at 50th St. Through Jan. 6. For information about show times and tickets, call 247-4777.)

Big Apple Circus—Featuring the flying Egorov Troupe, from Russia; a contortionist named Tunga, from Mongolia; Johnny Peers and his dog act; equestrienne Katja Schumann; two elephants called Anna May and Peggy; and a host of others. (Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center. Through Jan. 10. For information about show times and tickets, call 268-0055.)

Tim Miller—In his new performance work, "My Queer Body." (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. Dec. 10-13 at 7:30. Through Dec. 20.)

"(Jackie's Dreaming of) A Brown Christmas"—The folks from the club Jackie 60 present a song/dance/lip-synch/you-name-it holiday show. The cast includes Deborah Harry, Joey Arias, Robert La Fosse, and Chi Chi Valenti. (La Mama, 74A E. 4th St. 475-7710. Dec. 10-12 at 10. Through Dec. 19.)

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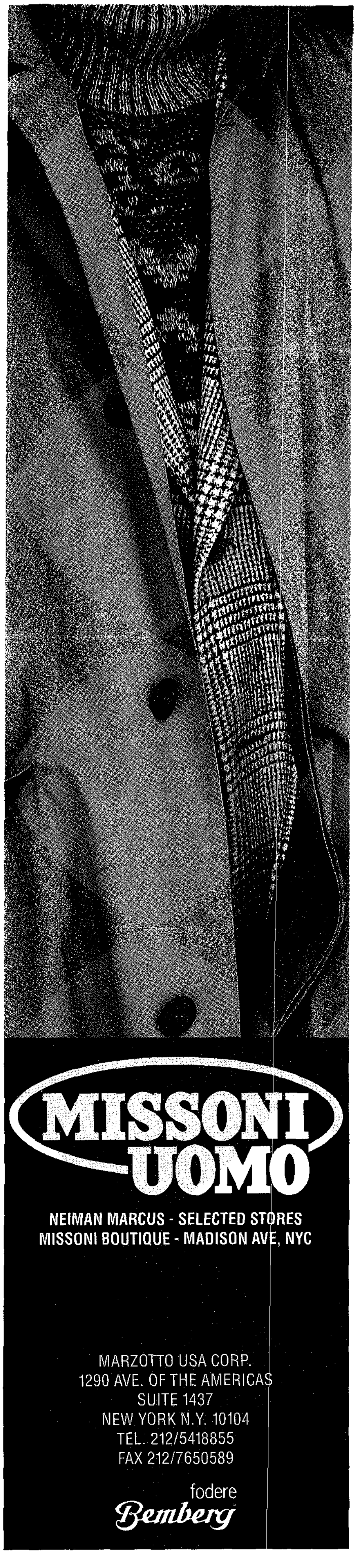

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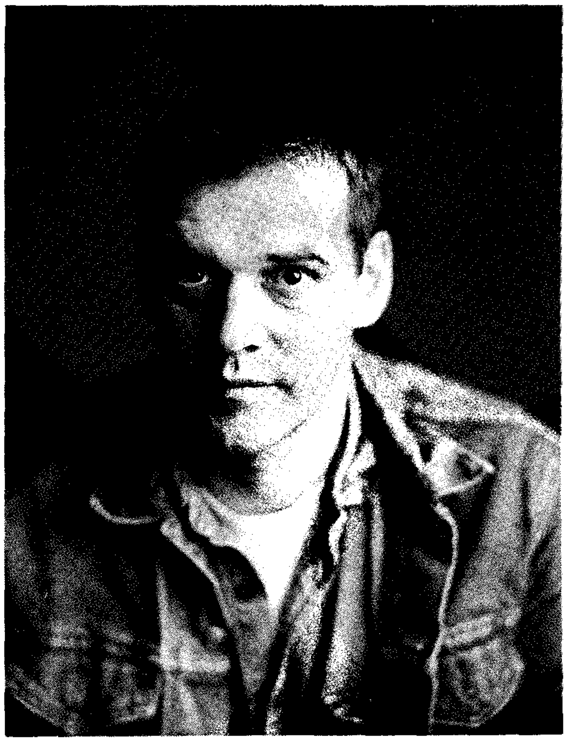
ART

Nostalgie de la Boue

Golems and goblins have arisen from potter's mud since Adam, along with palacefuls of shapely vessels for food and drink. Andrew Lord, a forty-two-year-old English potter, possesses a seductive outsider's attitude, and he is clearly besotted with the possibilities of his medium. He has ranged widely among its conventions, at times exercising Cubist control, at others invoking the aesthetic of homeliness perfected by Far Eastern ceramic traditions and, in this country, by George Ohr. In this show, the artist's first in New York in several years (65 Thompson Street Gallery; through January 9), there are no right angles and straight lines but, instead, a sort of wonky, baroque classicism and, for a change, a lot of color glazes—roseate tones, iridescent beiges, deep green, blazing turquoise. Fleshy knobs are in dramatic evidence, along with fissures that are sometimes "mended"—scarred with gold, in the Japanese manner—and sometimes left gaping. Lord's jugs and vases and platters are grand yet crude, and he has thoroughly fused these qualities in the kiln. His glazes flow freely, lavishly, over wart and chasm, evoking meltdowns and fantastic elfin fêtes. The installation brings visions of Santa Fe gift shops to mind.



Andrew Lord at 65 Thompson Street Gallery

TIMOTHY GREENFIELD-SANDERS

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"Fashion and History: A Dialogue" is the first installation in the redesigned Costume Institute. Starts Dec. 10. . . . ¶ Part 2 of "The Century of Tung Ch'i-ch'ang" explores the pioneering abstractionist's influence on artists of the later seventeenth century. Through Jan. 10. . . . ¶ A display (running concurrently with the Whitney retrospective) of two huge murals that Jean-Michel Basquiat made, in 1985, for the Mike Todd Room, at the Palladium. . . . ¶ "The Royal City of Susa: Ancient Near Eastern Treasures in the Louvre." Two hundred works in copper, bronze, stone, and clay. Through March 7. . . . ¶ The show of paintings, drawings, and sculpture from the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lille, includes works by Rubens, Goya, Delacroix, van Gogh, Fra Bartolommeo, and others. Through Jan. 17. . . . ¶ Two series of color photographs by Shomei Tomatsu: one depicts *Sakura*, or cherry-blossom time; the other, plastic flotsam and jetsam washed up on a beach. Through Jan. 31. . . . ¶ Color photographs by Leo Rubinfien, taken in Japan, China, and Southeast Asia. Through Jan. 3. . . . ¶ The museum's Christmas tree and Neapolitan crèche are on view. Through Jan. 10. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—The Matisse retrospective has been extended through Jan. 19. (Plan wisely; call 708-9850 for ticket information. Tickets can be purchased in advance, and a limited number of same-day tickets are available on a first-come, first-served basis.). . . ¶ Jana Štěrbák's new "Projects" installation, "Sisyphus II," consists of an egg-shaped metal sculpture and a black-and-white film. Through Jan. 5. . . . ¶ "New Photography 8," a show of work by Dieter Appelt, Ellen Brooks, Darrel Ellis, Dennis Farber, Robert Flynt, Mary Miss, Gundula Schulze, and Toshio Shibata. Through Jan. 12. . . . ¶ A hundred and twenty-five books, by such artists as Giorgio de Chirico, Lucio Fontana, Francesco Clemente, and Giacomo Manzù, are on view in "The Artist and the Book in Twentieth-Century Italy." Through Feb. 16. (Museum hours through Jan. 19: open Sundays through Tuesdays, and Fridays and Saturdays, 10:30 to 6; Wednesdays, 12 to 6; Thursdays, 10:30 to 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"The Great Utopia: The Russian and Soviet Avant-Garde, 1915-32." This fertile period is evoked in an eclectic show, comprising paintings of every level of quality, a tantalizing variety of revolutionary posters, textiles, and porcelains, and several superb architectural drawings and models. Through Jan. 3. (Open daily, except Thursdays and Dec. 13, 10 to 8. Closes at 4 on Dec. 13.)

Guggenheim Museum SoHo, 575 Broadway—Works that Robert Rauschenberg made between 1949 and 1954, before the appearance of the groundbreaking combines. Through Jan. 25. . . . ¶ "Marc Chagall and the Jewish Theatre." Through Jan. 17. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings until 10.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—It is the paradox of Agnes Martin's career that she has made soft, delicate paintings in a rigid grid format. Within her narrow vocabulary, she explores infinite variation. Though each painting in this retrospective is a perfect distillation of her œuvre, the more you see, the more you want to see. Through Jan. 31. . . . ¶ A retrospective of paintings by Jean-Michel Basquiat. Through Feb. 14. . . . ¶ "Photography: Beginning a Collection" includes works by Cindy Sherman, Sally Mann, and Ana Mendieta. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—"Max Weber: The Cubist Decade, 1910-20." Sixty paintings and works on paper by the Ameri-

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can modernist. Through Jan. 10. . . . ¶ Had he survived the Franco-Prussian War, Frédéric Bazille (1841-70) might have held his own with the Impressionists of his generation. This show of sixty-one paintings and works on paper includes most of his œuvre. Through Jan. 24. . . . ¶ Sixty sculptures by Auguste Rodin have been reinstalled in the Cantor Gallery. Among the works here are two independent pieces from "The Gates of Hell"; maquettes, studies, and four full-scale figures from "The Burghers of Calais"; and several versions of "Balzac.". . . ¶ "Dame of the Narrows" (1976), a large-scale sculpture of the Staten Island ferry arriving at the Manhattan terminal, by Red Grooms, Mimi Gross, and the Ruckus Construction Company, is currently installed in the lobby. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St.—A permanent installation of blue-and-white Chinese porcelain from the fifteenth century to the nineteenth is on view. (Open daily, except Mondays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St.—A display of decorative metalwork, cloissonné, and lacquerware from the Meiji period (1868-1912). Through Jan. 10. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 5.)

Jewish Museum, at the New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—"Convivencia: Jews, Muslims, and Christians in Medieval Spain." A hundred manuscripts, textiles, ceramics, and architectural fragments are on view. Through Dec. 20. (Open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Sundays, 11 to 5; Thursdays, 11 to 8; Fridays, 11 to 3.)

Museum of the City of New York, Fifth Ave. at 104th St.—"Songs of My People," an ambitious attempt to record contemporary African-American experience through the works of a heterogeneous group of black photographers. Fifty-three photographers are represented, and the work ranges from the rigorous to the sentimental, from the original to the clichéd, but passion is strong throughout. Through Jan. 3. . . . ¶ "Growing Old in Spanish Harlem," a show of photographs of elderly Latinos and Latinas, accompanied by quotations from the subjects. Through Jan. 3. (Open Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

The New Museum, 583 Broadway—"The Spatial Drive," a show of works concerned with transfers of energy. Through Jan. 3. . . . ¶ "FluxAttitudes," a large gathering of visitor-activated works. Through Jan. 3. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, noon to 8.)

New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—"Mother Goose in New York," an exhibition of nineteenth-century juvenile books and woodblocks from the presses of McLoughlin Bros. Through Dec. 27. . . . ¶ Nearly two hundred nineteenth-century board games—from the Majestic Game of the Asiatic Ostrich to Telegraph Boy to the Checkered Game of Life—in a show called "Victorian Pleasures." Through Jan. 3. . . . ¶ Twenty panels from the AIDS Memorial Quilt are on view. Organized in collaboration with the NAMES Project Foundation. Through Jan. 3. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 11 to 5, and Thursday evenings until 8; Sundays, 11 to 5.)

Schomburg Center, 515 Lenox Ave., at 135th St.—A retrospective of paintings, watercolors, drawings, and textile designs by Loïs Mailou Jones. Through Jan. 3. (Open Mondays through Wednesdays, noon to 8; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Richard Diebenkorn / Andy Warhol (1930-87)—Eleven paintings (1968 to 1985) from the Ocean Park series. Diebenkorn, along with de Kooning, is the last artist left who sustains the grand authority of American abstract painting of the fifties. He has, however, taken some ribbing for essentially making the same painting over and over, which in a certain sense is a legitimate accusation. But, as this show demonstrates, there is also great variation in his paintings. / A show of drawings from the mid-eighties. Through Jan. 9. (Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. . . . ¶ A show of late paintings by Warhol is at Gagosian's downtown space. See SoHo listings.)

Pierre Roy (1880-1950)—Thirty saucily surreal paintings by the French artist. Through Jan. 22. (Feigen, 49 E. 68th St.)

Short List—william blake, Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. (open Mondays, through Dec. 31); **anne blodgett,** Marbella, 28 E. 72nd St. (through Dec. 19); **peter cain,** Marks, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St. (through Jan. 28); **helen frankenthaler,** Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. (through Dec. 17); **joel janowitz,** Munroe, 9 E. 84th St. (open Wednesdays through Saturdays, noon to 5, through Dec. 23); **wilhelm lehmbruck,** Werner, 21 E. 67th St. (through Jan. 16); **francisco toledo,** Martin, 23 E. 73rd St. (through Dec. 23).

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

Ellsworth Kelly—Two shows of new work. An Ellsworth Kelly exhibition is always a satisfying experience. Using the simplest geometric vocabulary, Kelly has been endlessly inventive in exploring the complexities of color and form. In the works at Blum Helman (20 W. 57th St.), the new wrinkle is that, rather than juxtaposing two panels of simple geometric form, he has overlapped them. This gives the work a whole new dynamic spin. Through Jan. 2. . . . ¶ At Castelli (420 West Broadway) is a single azure-blue floor painting—a forty-three-foot-long trapezoid—that almost fills the gallery. It's a daring, rich, beautiful work that taps the strain of "objectness" that has coursed through Kelly's career and that links this supreme proto-minimalist with such younger figures as Donald Judd. But ultimately the work's strength is its vulnerability, which makes it indisputably this artist's own. Through Dec. 19.

STEPHEN SALERNO

Loren Madsen—The entire gallery is devoted to a single copper sculpture that looks like a mammoth pod. It has some marvellously expressive elements, from its welded ribs to its creepy skinny legs. But it's also too dependent on a grandiosity of form without any corresponding largeness of content. Through Dec. 23. (McKee, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Pat Steir—This artist revealed the first of her "Waterfall" paintings two years ago: big black-and-white extravaganzas, whose drips and layered splashes seemed somehow more considered than the classic Pollocks to which they were so obviously a response. But they were also inspired by traditional Chinese and Tibetan painting styles, and represent much more than a sophisticated feminist appropriation of a "male" technique. The artist's measured dialogue with the big boys of the New York School continues in her magisterial new show, with the appearance now of vibrant colors like ultramarine and an unfathomably deep, seasoned red more commonly associated with antique Asian glazes. Through Dec. 31. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

Short List—karel appel, Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. (through Dec. 31); **josé bedia,** Frumkin-Adams, 50 W. 57th St. (through Dec. 31); **kent bellows,** Tatistcheff, 50 W. 57th St. (through Dec. 31); **stuart davis,** Ulysses, 41 E. 57th St. (through Dec. 31); **luis gordillo,** Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through Jan. 2); **dan graham,** Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through Jan. 2); **leon kroll,** ACA, 41 E. 57th St. (through Jan. 9); **walt kuhn,** Midtown-Payson, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through Dec. 31); **robert m. kulicke,** Davis & Langdale, 231 E. 60th St. (through Dec. 22); **louis lozowick,** Associated American Artists, 20 W. 57th St. (through Dec. 31); **james moore,** Schmidt Bingham, 41 W. 57th St. (opens Saturdays at noon, through Dec. 24); **giorgio morandi,** Baldacci-Daverio, 41 E. 57th St. (through Jan. 30); **zoran music,** Krugier, 41 E. 57th St. (through Jan. 30); **herman rose,** Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St. (through Dec. 19); **robert ryman,** Pace, 32 E. 57th St. (through Jan. 9); **art spiegelman,** Galerie St. Etienne, 24 W. 57th St. (through Jan. 9); **leonard stokes and joe nicastri,** McCoy, 41 E. 57th St. (open Mondays, through Jan. 9).

GALLERIES—SoHo

Eric Fischl—The five big new paintings here make for a very strong show, in which this artist's most characteristic strategies—ambiguous body language, unconscious or inappropriate nudity, startling scenic disjunctures—are again in evidence. Through Dec. 19. (Boone, 417 West Broadway.)

Mike Kelley—Most of the artists associated with this gallery achieved their greatest success at the beginning of their career, and many of them suffered for it. Kelley had to wait nearly a decade for his day in the sun, and his work shows the benefits of protracted obscurity. With L.A.'s artistic coming of age, and with the recent emergence of a school of scatological art, Kelley has finally arrived. This is a wonderful, comic show about sadism. The artist has scoured the world of wacko do-it-yourself catalogues for rooms of confinement, torture tables, and even an old-fashioned deep-colonics board. There's a whistle-while-you-work hominess

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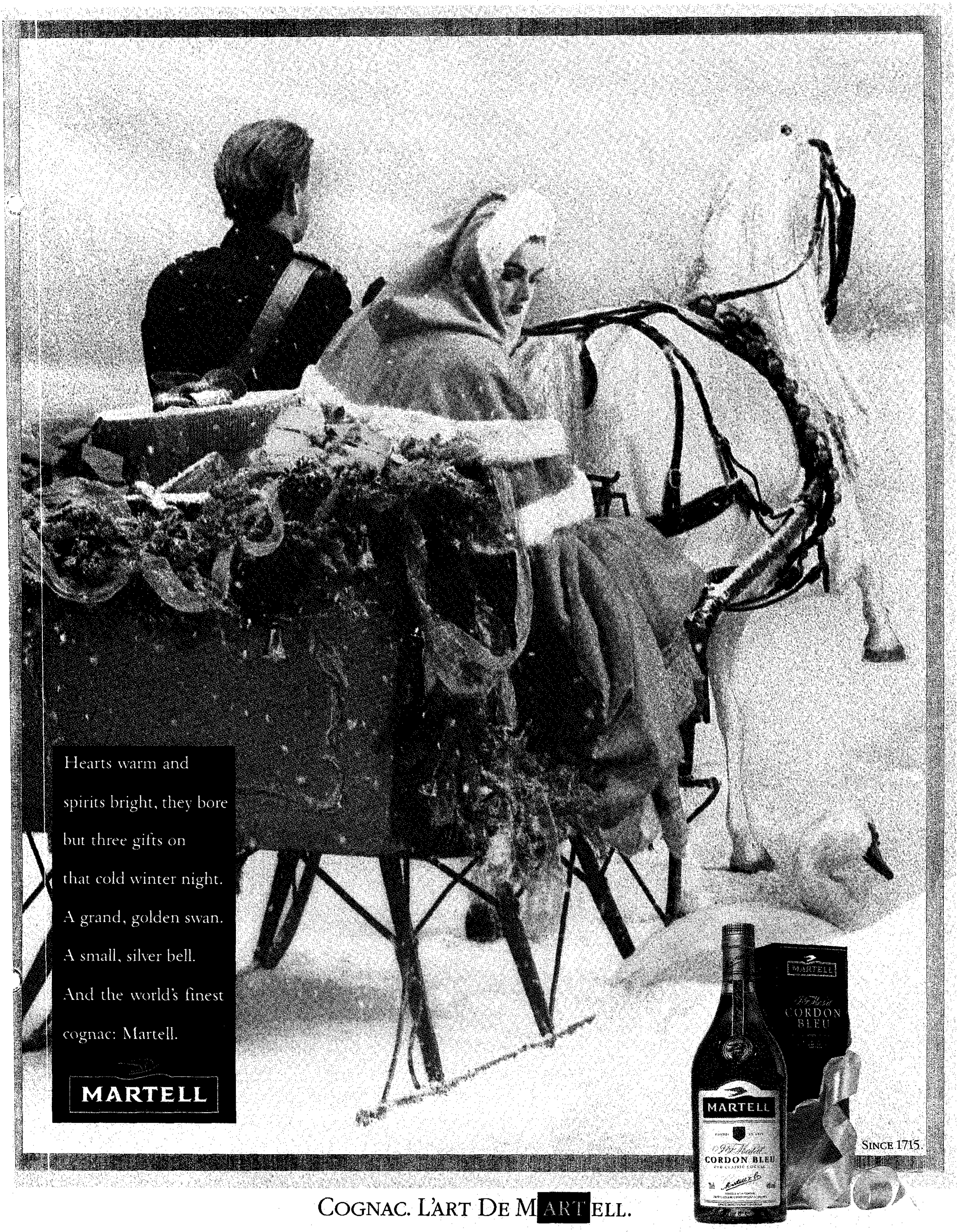
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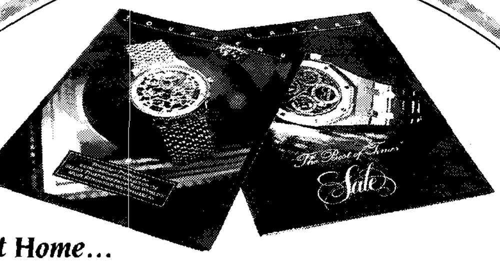

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to these spare-time perversities. "Private Address System," a foil to all the recent discussions about free speech, is the defining piece of the show. It consists of a portable toilet with two microphones in the bowl producing continuous wailing feedback. Through Jan. 8. (Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St.)

MARKUS RAETZ—In the world of this artist, there are definitely two sides to every sculpture. For instance, there's a sculpture here that, viewed from one side, looks like a silhouette of the artist Joseph Beuys wearing his legendary hat; from the other side, though, it is a rabbit, a metaphoric image of prestidigitation. Another work, in a consummate inversion of Futurism, is a generic head from one side, an upended head from the other. And in a companion piece, a similar upside-down head appears rightside-up in the mirror just beside it. It would seem that Raetz has merely cornered the market on cleverness, but his work also has something of the deadpan perversity of Magritte. Through Dec. 30. (Brooke Alexander, 59 Wooster St.)

HAROLD STEVENSON—Inaugurating this brave new storefront gallery is a single thirty-nine-foot-long multi-panelled painting: a male nude titled "The New Adam," which was painted in 1962. It looks like a softer, warmer Rosenquist. The actor Sal Mineo was the artist's model. While it is certainly a curiosity, the painting also seems fresh and entirely apropos, given such recent flesh-obsessed endeavors as Alan Turner's. An inspired rediscovery. Through Dec. 19. (Algus, 25 Thompson St. Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 3 to 8; Saturdays, 10 to 6.)

ANDY WARHOL (1930-87)—A fascinating show of an essentially unknown body of work by one of the most important artists of the eighties—yes, the eighties. Made shortly before he died, these paintings illustrate the two sides of Warhol: the detached, cool materialist, and the less frequently glimpsed visionary. They also show the influence of the artist's collaboration with Jean-Michel Basquiat—not just in their style (the anatomical chartings, the writing, even the very orthography) but in their youthful vigor and self-obsession. These are among Warhol's most autobiographical works. The images, mostly rooted in advertisements and spanning his entire career, filter his own quarter-century engagement with the media, urban life, and violence through his influence on eighties artists, from the so-called "Pictures" group to practitioners of the gritty Times Square aesthetic of COLAB. As usual with Warhol, the paintings that truly resonate are the largest ones. Through Jan. 30. (Gagosian, 136 Wooster St. . . . ¶ A show of related drawings is at Gagosian's uptown space, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St., through Jan. 9.)

MATTHEW WEINSTEIN—New paintings. Using viscous glazes that suggest body fluids, organic forms that look like corpuscles and skeletons, and a lot of lurid oranges and purples, Weinstein conjures visions of tissue sections under glass. Through Dec. 19. (Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway.)

"WALL DRAWINGS"—The wall drawing, a politically charged format of the seventies, has made a comeback here. All the works are problematic in fruitful ways. Gary Simmons' piece consists of two racially stereotyped cartoon figures set against a field of nooses, the whole drawn in smudged white chalk on a pitch-black ground; it has a hip rhythm to it, though it catches the eye more than it engages the mind. Nicole Eisenman captures the mind, though not without chafing it a bit with cliché; she has created a W.P.A.-like sequence of murals that are very grand and spoofy, with images about economics and gender—one depicts the Monopoly Man as a hobo roasting a weenie. Celia Alvarez Muñoz, who is more than a quarter century older than the two others, gives the multicultural wallfest some historical ballast. Her work, which honors Latinas in the garment industry, has some powerful images but is somewhat overintellectualized. Through Dec. 19. (The Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St. Open Wednesday evenings until 8.)

"A New American Flag"—Among the more compelling works here are a leather wallet, by Judith Shea, with flags the size of dollar bills protruding from it, and a flag, by Kim Abeles, composed of dozens of shirt labels from garments made everywhere but in the U.S.A. Through Jan. 9. (Protetch, 560 Broadway.)

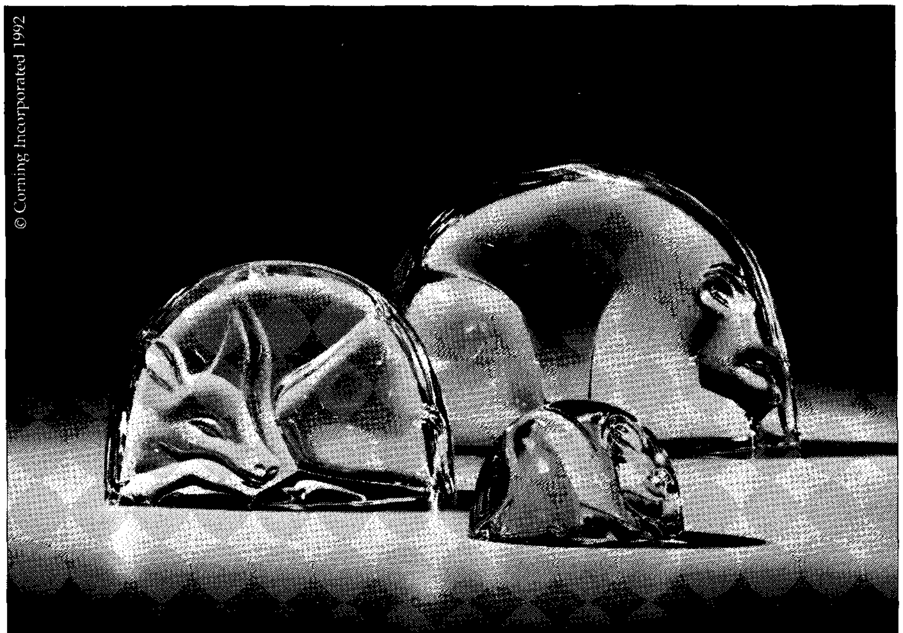
Short List—**adolf benca,** M-13, at 72 Greene St. (through Jan. 2); **lydia dona,** Cugliani, 40 Wooster St. (through Dec. 31); **jimmie durham,** Klagsbrun, 51 Greene St. (through Dec. 12); **karen finley,** Lipton, 67 Prince St. (through Jan. 9); **keith haring,** Shafrazi, 130 Prince St. (through Jan. 16); **willy heeks,** Beitzel, 102 Prince St. (through Dec. 23); **joan jonas** and **rodney graham,** Hearn, 39 Wooster St. (through Dec. 23); **ed and nancy kienholz,** Louver, 130 Prince St. (through Jan. 2); **harriet korman,** Lennon, Weinberg, 580 Broadway (through Dec. 31); **roy lichtenstein,** Castelli, 420 West Broadway (through Dec. 19); **ken lum,** Rosen, 130 Prince St. (through Jan. 16); **mark madel,** Postmasters, 80 Greene St. (through Dec. 19); **allan mc collum** and **barbara kasten,** Weber, 142 Greene St. (through Dec. 23); **christian philipp müller,** American Fine Arts, 40 Wooster St. (through Dec. 31); **odd nerdrum,** Thorp, 103 Prince St. (through Jan. 9); **richard onyango,** Ala, 560 Broadway (through Dec. 31); **janis provisor,** Toll, 146 Greene St. (through Dec. 23); **gerhard richter,** Nolan-Eckman, 560 Broadway (through Jan. 30); **andreas schön,** Gorney, 100 Greene St. (through Dec. 19); **saul steinberg,** Pace, 142 Greene St. (through Jan. 9); **juan uslé,** Good, 532 Broadway (through Dec. 19); **viswanadhan,** Briet, 558 Broadway (through Dec. 19); **jenny watson,** Nosei, 100 Prince St. (through Dec. 31).

PHOTOGRAPHY

Tidal Waves

THE new exhibition at the Lowinsky gallery (575 Broadway; through January 30) includes two groups of seascapes, taken about a hundred and forty years apart, that are breathtaking, both for their drama and for their technical beauty. The contemporary images, by Robert Adams, were shot in the region of Oregon where the Columbia River meets the Pacific. They are so articulate that the waves seem to undulate in their frames. In the next room are the great seascapes of Gustave Le Gray, taken when photography was new. These are luminous images in which the horizon line stimulates the viewer's imagination.

In the last room is the scoop of the show—Le Gray's series of photographs of Millet's copy of the "Mona Lisa." The "Mona Lisa" has been reproduced countless times in books and on postcards, but those copies lack the emotional quality that makes the Le Grays unforgettable. Not only have these salt prints never been reproduced, they've never even been exhibited before. They came up at auction in Paris about two years ago and were purchased by Ezra Mack, a young private dealer who obviously knows a treasure when he sees one. Thought to date back to the late eighteen-forties, these luscious photographs, all in different tones, beat Andy Warhol—and Sherrie Levine—to the punch by more than a hundred years.



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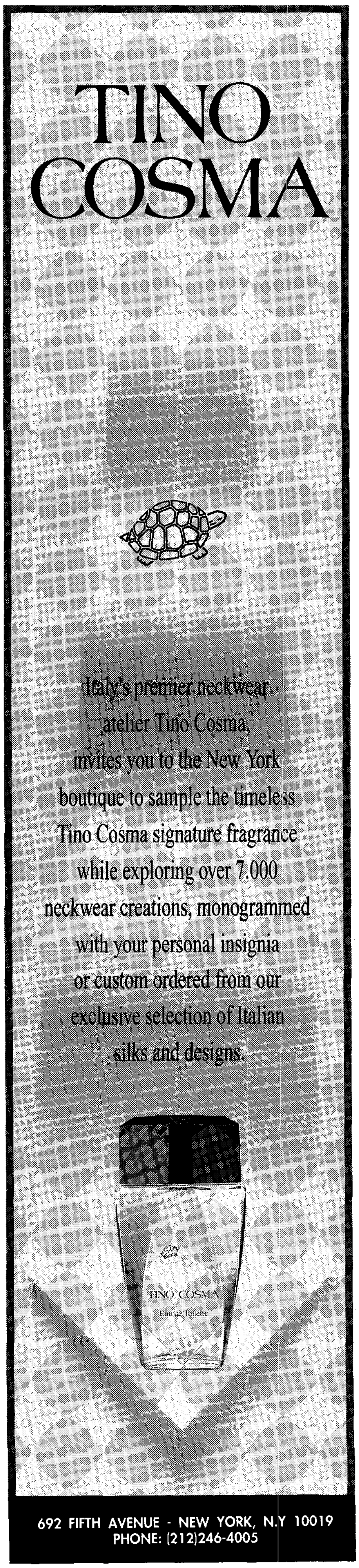
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PHOTOGRAPHY–Cont'd

"New Photography 8"—This MOMA series has dramatically expanded, and now includes eight artists instead of the customary three. The work varies widely in approach and in strength. It's hard to understand, for instance, why Mary Miss has been included, since her architectural photographs seem to be just travel versions of similar work done by another sculptor/photographer, Gordon Matta-Clark, more than twenty years ago. But it's wonderful to see the imagery of Darrel Ellis getting its due. His use of his father's family pictures makes for autobiographical works that are both tender and upsetting. Through Jan. 12. (Museum of Modern Art.)

"Troubled Times. . ."—This show features three artists whose street photography is legendary—Lisette Model, Louis Faurer, and Leon Levinstein. Almost all the works were shot in New York. Model's forties wartime pictures are images of loss, and of emotionally and physically wounded people, and Faurer's images, many of them from the mid-fifties, depict urban down-and-outs. Levinstein's photographs, from the late fifties and early sixties, document the early stages of the urban alienation and abandonment that have since become so widespread in the city. Through Dec. 31. (Sander, 105 Hudson St. Closed Tuesdays.)

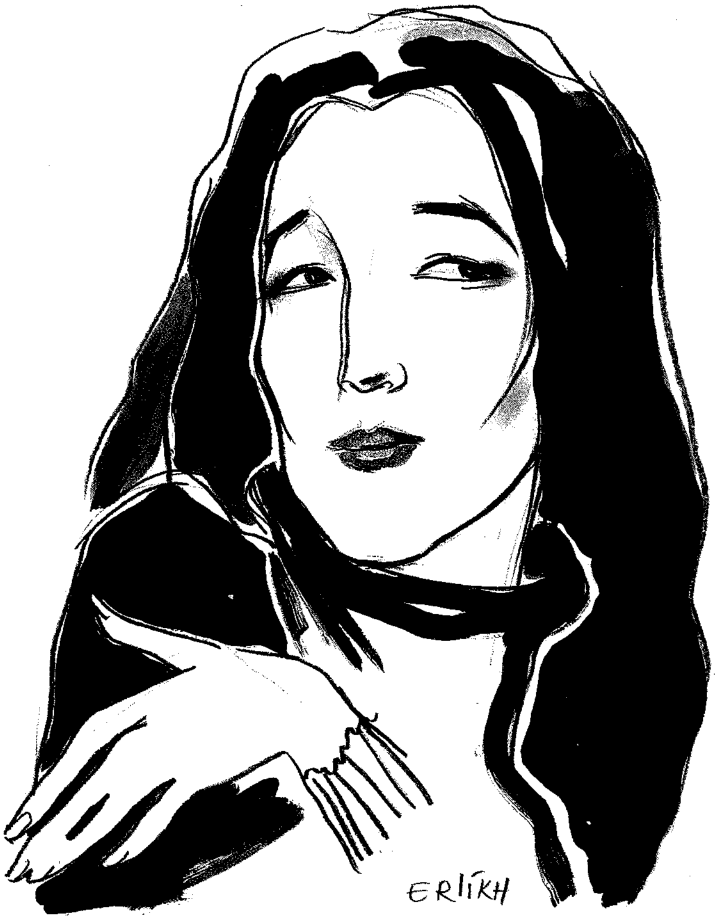
Short List—**ELLEN CAREY,** Baum, 588 Broadway (through Jan. 9); **SALLY GALL,** Saul, 155 Spring St. (through Dec. 24); **JEAN KALLINA** and **JAN HENLE,** Pace-MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. (through Jan. 16); **HIROJI KUBOTA,** International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8; through Jan. 31); **FRANK MAJORE,** Holly Solomon, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (open Mondays, through Jan. 4); **WEEGEE,** Borden, 560 Broadway (through Jan. 16); **CARRIE MAE WEEMS,** P.P.O.W, 532 Broadway (through Dec. 23).

MUSIC

Uchida's Keynote

The Japanese pianist Mitsuko Uchida has caught the imagination of concertgoers as vividly as anyone in her generation. If an American listener attending one of her joyous, passionate recitals were to think even for a second about the bad old image of Asian musicians (earnest, Suzuki-trained, reticent: soulless technicians), it could only be to wave it away incredulously. In fact, Ms. Uchida's recent predecessors from the East have so thoroughly erased the stereotype that we can now see where her heart really lies: the Austro-German classics—the successors to Mozart (with whose works the pianist was especially identified as she rose to prominence). Her December 11 program at Carnegie Hall is a horn of plenty: rich, mature sonatas by Beethoven and Schubert; Webern's Op. 27 variations (Ms. Uchida, like Peter Serkin and a few others, makes the Viennese modernists sound as if they were a natural part of the tradition); and, in all its overflowing fantasy, Schumann's "Carnaval."

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Alice Tully Hall, 875-5050; for Avery Fisher Hall, 875-5030; for Carnegie Hall and Weill Recital Hall, 247-7800; for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719; and for the 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St., 415-5440.)



Mitsuko Uchida at Carnegie Hall

EDUARD ERIKH

HOLIDAY MUSIC

Handel's "Messiah"—HANDEL AND HAYDN SOCIETY: Christopher Hogwood directs the Boston-based period-instrument group, with soprano Sharon Baker, mezzo-soprano Judith Malafronte, countertenors Derek Lee Ragin and Johnson Flucker, tenor Douglas Johnson, and basses David Thomas and David Murray. (Avery Fisher Hall. Dec. 9 at 7:30.)... **CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE:** Bruce Fifer directs the cathedral's combined choirs, plus an orchestra and soloists. (Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. 662-2133. Dec. 10 at 7:30.)... **MASTERWORK CHORUS AND ORCHESTRA:** David Randolph directing, with various soloists. (Carnegie Hall. Dec. 12 at 2:30 and 8 and Dec. 13 at 2.)... **RIVERSIDE CHURCH:** Kent Tritle directs all of Part One and portions of the rest, with soloists provided but with the choral requirements entrusted to the audience. Bring your own score, or buy one at the door. (Riverside Dr. at 120th St. Dec. 13 at 4. Admission by donation.... **NOTE:** Beginning at 3, Joseph Clair Davis will intone transcriptions from oratorios on the church's enormous carillon.)... **CANTERBURY CHORAL SOCIETY AND ST. PETER'S CHOIR:** Charles Dodsley Walker directs an audience sing-along. Bring your own score, or buy one at the door. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Dec. 14 at 7:30. Admission by contribution.)... **ASCENSION MUSIC CHORUS AND ORCHESTRA:** Dennis Keene directing, with soprano Beverly Myers, countertenor Drew Minter, tenor Mark Bleeke, and baritone Kevin Deas. (Church of the Ascension, Fifth Ave. at 10th St. 254-8553. Dec. 14 at 8.)... **MUSICA VIVA:** The group's annual audience sing-along of the entire oratorio, with orchestra; Walter Klauss directing. (All Souls Unitarian Church, Lexington Ave. at 80th St. 794-3646. Dec. 15 at 7:30.)... **ST. THOMAS CHOIR AND CONCERT ROYAL:** Gerre Hancock directs the chorus and baroque orchestra; with soprano Christine Brandes, countertenor Drew Minter, tenor Mark Bleeke, and baritone Curtis Streetman. (St. Thomas Church, Fifth Ave. at 53rd St. 757-7013, ext. 3003. Dec. 15 and Dec. 17 at 7:30.)... **VIRGIN CONSORT:** Kyler Brown directs the period-instrument ensemble, with soprano Julianne Baird, countertenor Drew Minter, tenor Paul Elliot, and bass-baritone John Ostendorf. (Church of St. Mary the Virgin, 145 W. 46th St. 921-2939. Dec. 16 at 7:30.)... **MUSICA SACRA:** Directed by Richard Westenburg, with soprano Joyce Guyer, countertenor Michael Chance, tenor Steven Tharp, and baritone David Evitts. (Carnegie Hall. Dec. 16 at 8.)

Entertainments at the World Financial Center—Dec. 9: The Boys Choir of Harlem, Walter Turnbull directing.... ¶ Dec. 12: The Philharmonia Virtuosi, Richard Kapp conducting.... ¶ Dec. 14: Rob Fisher conducting the Orchestra of St. Luke's and the New York Choral Artists, with soprano Maureen McGovern.... ¶ Dec. 16: The Empire Brass, with harpist Nancy Allen. (Winter Garden, World Financial Center, Battery Park City. Evenings at at 6:30. No tickets necessary.)

Westminster Choir and Orchestra of St. Luke's—Joseph Flummerfelt directs a seasonal grab-bag that includes Bach's Cantata No. 191 ("Gloria in Excelsis Deo"), excerpts from Handel's "Messiah," and English Renaissance music (with the American Brass Quintet). (Carnegie Hall. Dec. 10 at 8.)

Choirs of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine—Bruce Fifer directs the cathedral's combined choirs in a program that includes excerpts from Handel's "Messiah," Vaughan Williams' "Fantasia on Christmas Carols" (featuring baritone Philip Cutlip), and traditional carols (with audience participation). (Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. 662-2133. Dec. 11 at 7:30.)

Juilliard Chamber Orchestra—Christopher Kendall conducts a Christmassy concert consisting of the hibernal and vernal portions of Vivaldi's "The Four Seasons" (with violinist Ji-Eun Lim), two concertos "per la Notte di Natale" (composed nearly three hundred years apart, by Corelli and Dallapiccola), and Respighi's "Trittico Botticelliano." (Alice Tully Hall. Dec. 11 at 8. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 769-7406.)

Riverside Choral Society—Patrick Gardner directs Britten's "Saint Nicholas" and two works by the Argentine composer Ariel Ramirez (including his "Misa Criolla"). (Church of the Heavenly Rest, Fifth Ave. at 90th St. Dec. 11 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Candlelight at Columbia—Gail Archer directs the Barnard-Columbia Chorus and the St. Paul's Chapel Baroque Orchestra in a Baroque concert with Baroque illumination: Bach's F-Minor Harpsichord Concerto (featuring Claudia Dumschat) and Christmas Cantata No. 40 ("Darzu ist erschienen der Sohn Gottes"), Schütz's Magnificat, and Handel's "Dixit Dominus." (St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University; enter at Broadway at 116th St. Dec. 11-12 at 8. Tickets at the door on the nights of the concerts.)

Metropolitan Singers/Greek Choral Society—Dino Anagnost directs (by candlelight) his own "Suite on Byzantine Hymns"; Dvořák's Te Deum; works by Tchaikovsky, Elgar, Reger; and traditional carols. With soprano Michelle Boucher, baritone Christòpheren Nomura, and the Little Orchestra Society. (Holy Trinity Cathedral, 319 E. 74th St. Dec. 12 at 7 and Dec. 13 at 6. For information about tickets, call 704-2100.)

Stonewall Chorale—Nancy Vang directs music of the season by Poulenc, Corigliano, and others. (Fashion Institute of Technology, 227 W. 27th St. Dec. 12 at 8. For information about tickets, call 608-4504.)

Canticum Novum Singers—Harold Rosenbaum directs music of the season by Josquin Desprez, Monteverdi, Barber, Britten, and others. (St. Ignatius' Episcopal Church, West End Ave. at 87th St. Dec. 12 at 8 and Dec. 13 at 3. For information about tickets, call 242-7744.)

The Voice of the Turtle—A Hanukkah concert. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Dec. 13 at 2.)

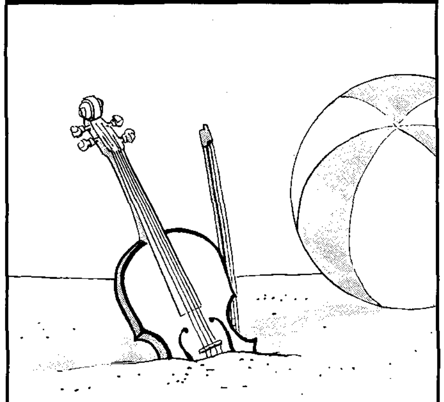
Central City Chorus—Charles Pilling directs Monteverdi's "Christmas Vespers," with a "period" orchestra. (Central Presbyterian Church, Park Ave. at 64th St. 838-0808. Dec. 13 at 7.)

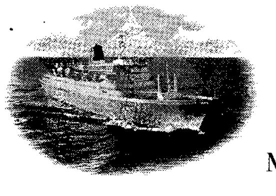
Vienna Choir Boys—Thomas Böttcher directs the lads in carols and other seasonal items—plus a staging of Weber's one-act comic opera "Abu Hassan." (Carnegie Hall. Dec. 13 at 7:30.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—EUGENE ONEGIN, with Mirella Freni, Birgitta Svendén, Francisco Araiza, Dwayne Croft, and Nicolai Ghiaurov; conducted by Seiji Ozawa. (Dec. 7 at 8.)... With Mirella Freni, Birgitta Svendén, Jerry Hadley, Sergei Leiferkus, and Nicolai Ghiaurov; Seiji Ozawa. (Dec. 16 at 8.)... **LA BOHÈME,** with Veronica Villarroel, Nancy Gustafson, Luis Lima, and Dwayne Croft; John Fiore. (Dec. 8, Dec. 11, and Dec. 14, all at 8.)... **LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR,** with June Anderson, Richard Leech, Haijing Fu, and Paul Plishka; Marcello Panni. (Dec. 9 at 8.)... With June Anderson, Richard Leech, Juan Pons, and Paul Plishka; Marcello Panni. (Dec. 12 at 1.)... With Martile Rowland, Franco Farina, Juan Pons, and Paul Plishka; Marcello Panni. (Dec. 15 at 8.)... **L'ELISIR D'AMORE,** with Kathleen Battle, Francisco Araiza, Mark Oswald, and Enzo Dara; Edoardo Müller. (Dec. 10 at 8.)... **DIE WALKÜRE,** with Gwyneth Jones, Jessye Norman, Hanna Schwarz, Gary Lakes, James Morris, and Aage Haugland, not to mention all those leaping Valkyrie sisters; James Levine. (Dec. 12 at 7.) (Metropolitan Opera House.)

John Brownlee Opera Theatre—The New York première of "The Yellow Wallpaper," an operatic treatment of Charlotte Perkins Gilman's late-nineteenth-century novella of feminism, domestic frustration, and insanity; composed by Ronald Perera to a libretto by Constance Congdon; staged by Mark Harrison, with David Gilbert conducting. (Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of





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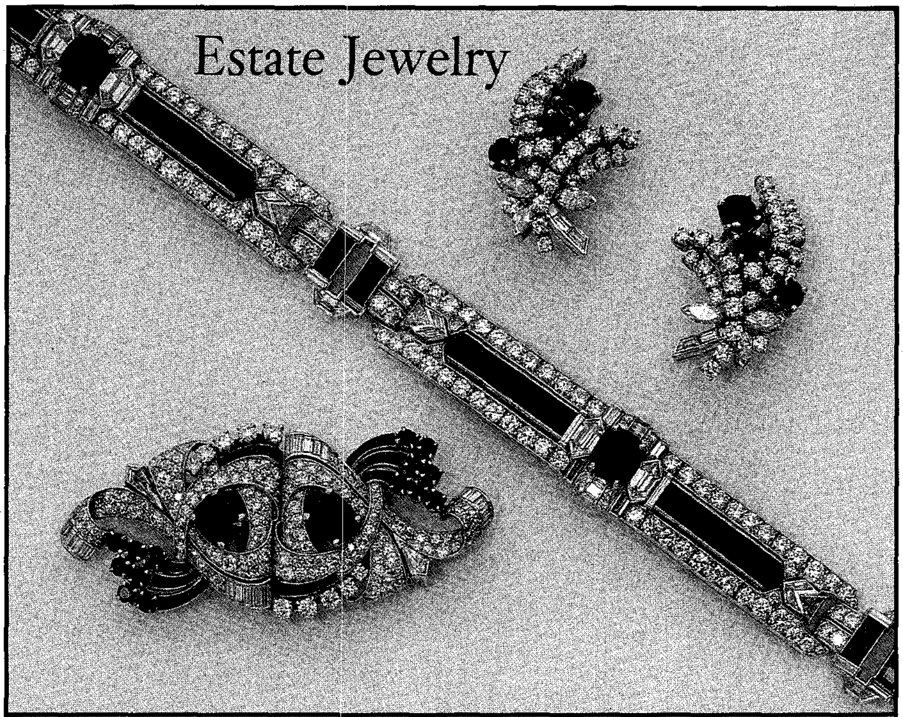
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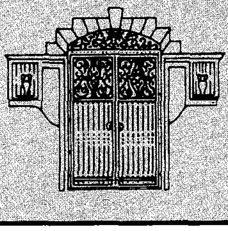

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MUSIC—Cont'd

Music, Broadway at 122nd St. 749-2802, ext. 540. Dec. 9 and Dec. 11 at 8, and Dec. 13 at 2:30. . . . **NOTE:** The composer and the librettist will discuss their work in a pre-performance chat on Dec. 9 at 7.)

New York Grand Opera—Vincent La Selva directs a concert performance of Verdi's "Nabucco." (Carnegie Hall. Dec. 9 at 8.)

Juilliard Opera Center—Presenting Donizetti's "Don Pasquale," in a staging that transposes the action to Rome in the nineteen-fifties ("So anch'io la virtù magica" meets "Three Coins in the Fountain"); with Hal France on the podium. (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. Dec. 9 and Dec. 11 at 8, and Dec. 13 at 2[illegible] For information about tickets, call 769-7406.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall. Dec. 7 at 8: A concert marking the orchestra's hundred-and-fiftieth birthday, with its three most recent music directors taking turns at the podium. Zubin Mehta conducts Strauss's "Till Eulenspiegel"; Pierre Boulez leads Debussy's "La Mer"; and the current music director, Kurt Masur, takes the reins for Dvořák's "New World" Symphony. . . . ¶ Dec. 10 at 8: Mr. Masur conducts Dukas's "The Sorcerer's Apprentice"; Isaac Stern is featured in Dvořák's Romance and Bartók's Violin Concerto No. 1; and members of the orchestra join Mr. Stern to play Brahms' G-Major Sextet (Op. 36). . . . ¶ Dec. 16 at 6:45: Charles Dutoit conducts Berlioz's "Béatrice et Bénédict" Overture and Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 1 (a brief program, with a reception following, for those who care to linger).

Philadelphia Orchestra—Charles Dutoit leads Stravinsky's "Apollon Musagète" and "Oedipus Rex"; with mezzo-soprano Eva Randova, tenor Keith Lewis, bass-baritone John Shirley-Quirk, bass Robert Lloyd, narrator William Warfield, and the Men of the Philadelphia Singers Chorale. (Carnegie Hall. Dec. 8 at 8.)

The Tallis Scholars—Peter Phillips directs sacred works by Josquin Desprez, Ludwig Senfl, Orlandus Lassus, and Hans Leo Hassler. (Alice Tully Hall. Dec. 10 at 8.)

New York Chamber Symphony—Richard Hickox conducts concerti grossi by Corelli, Bach, and Handel, as well as Bach's Magnificat (with the Mannes Chamber Singers and several soloists). (92nd Street Y. Dec. 12 at 8.)

New Amsterdam Singers—In the opening concert of the chorus's twenty-fifth season, Clara Longstreth directs Mozart's C-Minor Mass, "Ave Verum Corpus," and incidental music to "Thamos, König in Ägypten"; with soprano Joyce Guyer, mezzo-soprano Mary Ann Hart, tenor Richard Slade, and baritone André Solomon-Glover. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. Dec. 13 at 4.)

RECITALS

Christòpheren Nomura—In his New York début, the baritone performs songs by Barber, Bolcom, Brahms, Hundley, Montsalvatge, Ravel; with pianist Dalton Baldwin. Presented by Young Concert Artists. (92nd Street Y. Dec. 8 at 8.)

Music Today—Although Martha Graham's overriding achievement was as a dancer and choreographer, she was also responsible for a voluminous secondary legacy of music to accompany her creations. In fact, she commissioned so many high-quality scores that the American Composers Alliance honored her for her contribution to contemporary music. The Music Today Ensemble, many of whose members have played for the Graham Company, performs four of these works: Louis Horst's "Celebration" (Horst having served as the company's musical director from 1926 to 1948), Norman Dello Joio's "Diversion of Angels," William Schuman's "Night Journeys," and—the most celebrated of all the "Graham scores"—Aaron Copland's "Appalachian Spring" (here performed in its full ballet version, as opposed to the truncated

concert revision that has become ensconced in the symphonic repertoire). Samuel Wong conducts. (Merkin Concert Hall. Dec. 9 at 8.)

Bargemusic—Pianist Anne-Marie McDermott performs Brahms' "Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel"; Jian Wang joins her in Beethoven's D-Major Cello Sonata (Op. 102, No. 2); and violinist Theodore Arm completes the ensemble for the Trio in G Major by Cécile Chaminade. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. Dec. 10 at 7:30 and Dec. 13 at 4.)

New York Philomusica Chamber Ensemble—Performing John Harbison's "Fanfares and Reflections," Bartók's "Contrasts," Janáček's Violin Sonata, and Brahms' Piano Quintet. (Merkin Concert Hall. Dec. 10 at 8.)

Mitsuko Uchida—The pianist goes Germanic with Beethoven's E-Minor Sonata (Op. 90), Schumann's "Carnaval," Webern's Variations (Op. 27), and Schubert's G-Major Sonata (D. 894). (Carnegie Hall. Dec. 11 at 8.)

Beaux Arts Trio—Performing trios by Haydn, Beethoven (the "Archduke"), and Brahms (the A-Minor Clarinet Trio, with David Shifrin). (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Dec. 11-12 at 8.)

Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio—Performing trios by Haydn, Dvořák (the "Dumky"), and Tchaikovsky. (Washington Irving High School, Irving Pl. at 16th St. Dec. 12 at 8. For information about tickets, call 586-4680.)

Itzhak Perlman—The violinist performs sonatas by Bach (in G Major) and Prokofiev (his First), among other works; with pianist Samuel Sanders. (Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts, Whitman Hall, Brooklyn College. 1-718 951-4500. Dec. 12 at 8.)

Thomas Yehudah Tirino—Pianist, performing Beethoven's "Les Adieux" Sonata and Liszt's rarely played arrangement of Rossini's "William Tell" Overture, in addition to works by Chopin, Tchaikovsky, Ernesto Lecuona, and David Diamond. (Merkin Concert Hall. Dec. 12 at 8.)

Dorian Wind Quintet—Performing works by Rossini, Beethoven, Carter, Berio, and Grazyna Bacewicz. (Kosciuszko Foundation, 15 E. 65th St. 734-2130. Dec. 13 at 2:45.)

New York Philharmonic Ensembles—Members of the orchestra perform Wagner's "Siegfried Idyll," Schoenberg's "Verklärte Nacht," and Copland's "Appalachian Spring," in addition to a comical quintet fantasy by Franz Hasenöhrl called "Till Eulenspiegel Einmal Anders!," based on Strauss's familiar tone poem. (92nd Street Y. Dec. 13 at 3.)

Gerald Ranck—The harpsichordist continues his traversal of all Scarlatti's sonatas. (Ethical Culture Society, 2 W. 64th St. 874-5210. Dec. 13 at 3.)

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center—Presenting Mozart's Quintet for Piano and Winds (K. 452), the première of a work ("Marches") by Fred Lerdahl, and Dvořák's A-Major Piano Quintet. (Alice Tully Hall. Dec. 13 at 5 and Dec. 15 at 7:30. . . . **Note:** Mr. Lerdahl will participate in a pre-concert conversation on Dec. 15 at 6:30.)

Kathleen Battle—In a reprise of her Nov. 8 program, the soprano offers songs and arias by Mozart, Schumann, Bizet, Strauss, and Victor Herbert; with pianist Margo Garrett. (Alice Tully Hall. Dec. 13 at 8.)

Martin Bruns—Baritone, presenting songs by Schumann, Strauss, Wolf, Busoni, Vaughan Williams, and David Diamond; with pianist Brian Zeger. (Merkin Concert Hall. Dec. 13 at 8.)

Mendelssohn String Quartet—A brief concert of quartets by Haydn (in C Major, Op. 54, No. 2) and Dvořák (in G Major, Op. 106), preceded by a half hour of refreshments. (Merkin Concert Hall. Dec. 14 at 7.)

Thomas Hampson—The baritone will perform, and comment upon, some of Mahler's "Des Knaben Wunderhorn" settings; with pianist Craig Rutenberg. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Dec. 14 at 7. . . . **Note:** This concert, originally scheduled for Nov. 28, was postponed because of illness. Wise concertgoers will confirm this engagement close to the date.)

Benedetto Lupo—The pianist, who was awarded the bronze medal at the most recent Van Cliburn International Piano Competition, performs Brahms' Klavierstücke (Op. 119), Schumann's Sonata No. 2, Debussy's "La Plus que Lente" and "Images" (Book 2), and Bartók's Piano Sonata. (Alice Tully Hall. Dec. 14 at 8.)

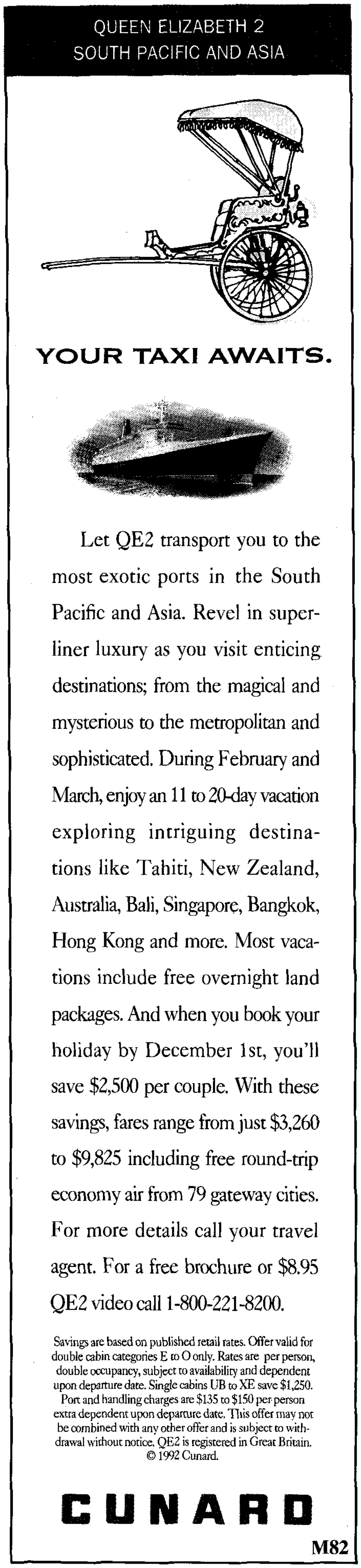
Hermann Prey—The baritone sings songs by Schubert, with James Levine collaborating at the piano. (Carnegie Hall. Dec. 14 at 8.)

St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble—Soprano Julianne Baird joins the instrumentalists for an evening of Bach: the D-Minor Harpsichord Concerto (with Robert Wolinsky), First Orchestral Suite, Cantata No. 202 ("Weichet Nur, Betrübte Schatten"), and arias for the Christmas season. (Merkin Concert Hall. Dec. 15 at 8.)

Chamber Music at the Y—The only chamber music richer than a Brahms string sextet is—let's see, that would have to be *two* Brahms sextets. Since it's the season to not count calories, those who care to indulge themselves may wish to take in both of his sextets on the same program, as delivered by violinists Jaime Laredo and Ida Kavafian, violists Michael Tree and Steven Tenenbom, and cellists Sharon Robinson and Peter Wiley. (92nd Street Y. Dec. 15-16 at 8.)

Tokyo String Quartet—The foursome plays Shostakovich's Quartet No. 8; cellist Gary Hoffman joins them for a Boccherini quintet; and violist Toby Hoffman completes the ensemble for Tchaikovsky's "Souvenir de Florence." (Alice Tully Hall. Dec. 16 at 8.)

Duo Tedesco—Playing guitar duets, mostly from the nineteenth century. (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. Dec. 16 at 8.)



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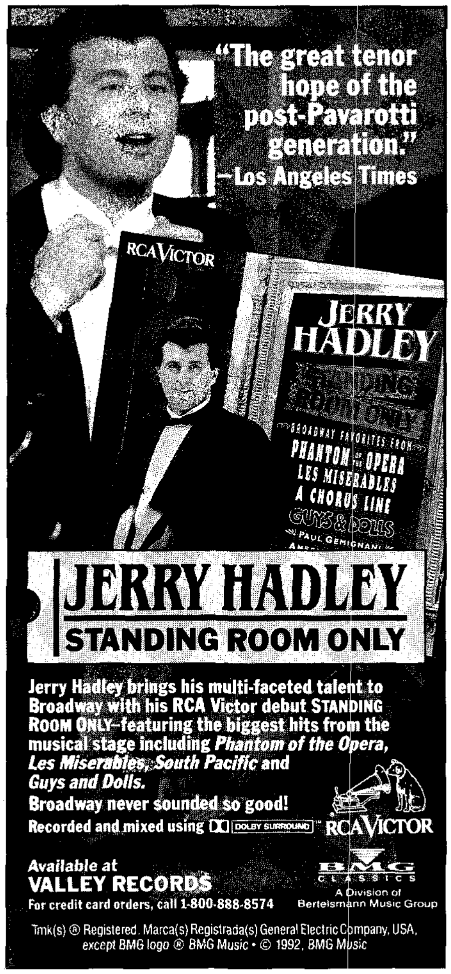

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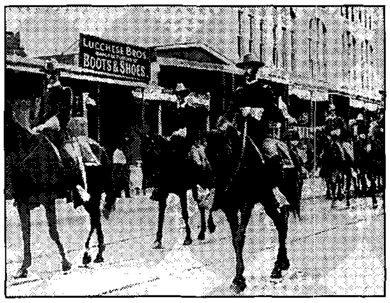

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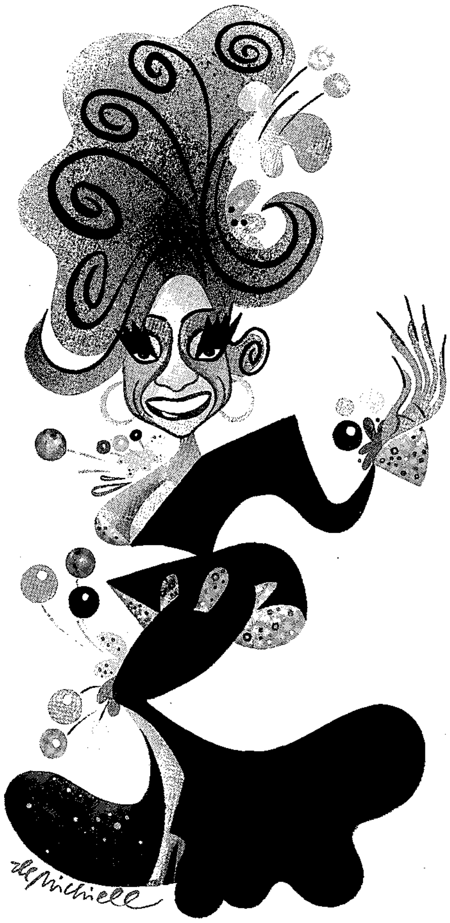
Sounds of Blackness—The forty-member Minneapolis-based group presents "The Night Before Christmas. . . A Musical Fantasy," a fully staged musical adaptation of Clement Moore's "A Visit from St. Nicholas." (Gershwin Theatre, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510. Dec. 15-16 at 7:30. Through Dec. 20.)

American Jazz Orchestra—David Murray conducts an evening of his own music. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. Dec. 10 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

"Highlights in Jazz"—Presenting Herb Ellis and Bucky Pizzarelli, with Ray Drummond and Marvin (Smitty) Smith. Tap dancer Buster Brown is also on the bill. (Pace Downtown Theatre, Spruce St. between Nassau and Gold Sts. 346-1715. Dec. 10 at 8.)



Celia Cruz at Alice Tully Hall

"Rhumbas & Love Songs"—Mario Bauza and his Afro-Cuban Jazz Orchestra, Los Muñequitos de Matanzas, and others, in a tribute to the artist Wifredo Lam. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Dec. 10 at 8.)

Lillias White—Manhattan Class Company, 120 W. 28th St. 727-7765. Dec. 11-12 at 11:30 P.M.

M'Lumbo—St. Ann's Church, 157 Montague St., Brooklyn. 1-718 858-2424. Dec. 12 at 8.

"Heavenly Jazz"—Presenting Dave McKenna. (Church of the Heavenly Rest, Fifth Ave. at 90th St. Dec. 13 at 5. Tickets at the door on the afternoon of the concert.)

Leroy Jenkins and Oliver Lake—Alternative Museum, 594 Broadway. 966-4444. Dec. 16 at 8.

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

Jets—Vs. the Indianapolis Colts, Dec. 13 at 1.

Knicks—Vs. the Seattle Supersonics, Dec. 8. . . . ¶ Vs. the Charlotte Hornets, Dec. 10. . . . ¶ Vs. the Detroit Pistons, Dec. 12. . . . ¶ Vs. the Denver Nuggets, Dec. 14. (Game time, 7:30.)

Nets—Vs. the Phoenix Suns, Dec. 8. . . . ¶ Vs. the Los Angeles Clippers, Dec. 10. . . . ¶ Vs. the Knicks, Dec. 15. (Game time, 7:30.)

Rangers—Vs. the Montreal Canadiens, Dec. 13. . . . ¶ Vs. the Calgary Flames, Dec. 15. (Game time, 7:30.)

Islanders—Vs. the Winnipeg Jets, Dec. 12 at 7:35.

Devils—Vs. the Washington Capitals, Dec. 9. . . . ¶ Vs. the Pittsburgh Penguins, Dec. 11. (Game time, 7:35.)

(The Jets play at Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands; for tickets, call 1-516 538-6600. The Knicks and the Rangers play at Madison Square Garden, 465-6000; the Islanders at the Nassau Coliseum, 1-516 794-9300; and the Nets and the Devils at the Meadowlands Arena, 1-201 935-3900.)

RACING

Horses—At Aqueduct: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 12:30. . . . At the Meadowlands: Tuesdays through Saturdays at 7:30. Through Dec. 12. . . . **trotting** at Yonkers Raceway: Mondays through Saturdays at 8 and Tuesdays at 1; Sundays at 6:45.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Get Agrippa—A cyberpunk's dream. "Agrippa (A Book of the Dead)" is a collaborative work by novelist William Gibson and artist Dennis Ashbaugh. On Dec. 9, the book's text will be be transmitted via modem from Wyoming to several computers around the world. Gibson's story, which is about the death of his father, is programmed to "self-destruct" once the words have been displayed. The actual books contain Ashbaugh's etchings, which are designed to mutate when exposed to light, and Gibson's story on a computer disk, complete with virus. In New York, you can experience "Agrippa" at the Americas Society (Park Ave. at 68th St., 249-8950, ext. 380), beginning at 6:30, or at the Kitchen (512 W. 19th St., 255-5793), beginning at 7.

Czech It Out—Václav Havel, playwright and former president of Czechoslovakia, will be honored at a night of readings and reminiscences, by Rose Styron, Galway Kinnell, and Edward Albee, among others. Czech pianist Rudolf Firkušný will also perform. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. Dec. 11 at 7:30. Tickets at the door on the night of the tribute.)

Words—Dec. 9 at 6: Louis Simpson will read from his own work and will deliver the annual "Education of the Poet" lecture. (French Institute–Alliance Française, 22 E. 60th St. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.). . . ¶ Dec. 10 at 8: Charis Conn and Iva Pekárková will read from their own fiction. (Dixon Place, 258 Bowery, near Houston St. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.). . . ¶ Dec. 14 at 8: Günter Grass will read from his new novel, "The Call of the Toad." John Irving will read the English translation. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.)

Talks—Dec. 15 at 6: Composer Elliott Carter will be interviewed by critic David Hamilton. (New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. For reservations, call 930-0571.). . . ¶ Dec. 15 at 7:30: Michael Ondaatje and John Irving will converse. (McGraw-Hill Auditorium, 1221 Sixth Ave., at 49th St. No tickets necessary.)

A Tour—Dec. 12 at noon: A visit to Ellis Island, sponsored by Big Onion Walking Tours. (For more information, call 439-1090.)

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16			

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN "MOVIES IN BRIEF," STARTING ON PAGE 33.

EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995 2000)
Theatre 1: "Enchanted April" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Crying Game" (†).
Theatre 3: "In the Soup" (directed by Alexandre Rockwell).
Theatre 4: "My New Gun" (†).
Theatre 5: "Simple Men" (Hal Hartley), with Robert Burke and William Sage.
Theatre 6: "Bad Lieutenant" (Abel Ferrara), with Harvey Keitel.

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
Dec. 7: Theatre closed.
Dec. 8-10: (Separate admissions) "The Trout" (1977, José Luis Garcia Sanchez; in Spanish), and "The Enchanted Forest" (1987, José Luis Cuerda; in Spanish), and "Poodle" (1978, Bigas Luna; in Spanish). From Dec. 11: "Night and Day" (Chantal Akerman, in French).

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "The Bodyguard" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Bodyguard" (†).
Theatre 3: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†).

Village Theatre VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th. (982-0400)
Theatre 1: "Bram Stoker's Dracula" (†).
Theatre 2: "Reservoir Dogs" (†).
Theatre 3: "Malcolm X" (†).
Theatre 4: "A River Runs Through It" (†).
Theatre 5: "Malcolm X" (†).
Theatre 6: "Bram Stoker's Dracula" (†).
Theatre 7: Through Dec. 10: "Jennifer Eight" (Bruce Robinson), with Andy Garcia and Uma Thurman. From Dec. 11: "A Few Good Men" (†).

Village East Cinemas, 2nd Ave. at 12th. (529-6799)
Theatre 1: "The Distinguished Gentleman" (Jonathan Lynn), with Eddie Murphy.
Theatre 2: "Glengarry Glen Ross" (†).
Theatre 3: "A Brief History of Time" (Errol Morris), a documentary.
Theatre 4: "Aladdin" (†).
Theatre 5: "Howards End" (James Ivory).
Theatre 6: "The Distinguished Gentleman."
Theatre 7: "Johnny Stecchino" (Roberto Benigni, in Italian), with Benigni.

19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)
Theatre 1: "Bram Stoker's Dracula" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Bodyguard" (†).
Theatre 3: "Jennifer Eight" (Bruce Robinson), with Andy Garcia and Uma Thurman.
Theatre 4: "The Bodyguard" (†).
Theatre 5: "Bram Stoker's Dracula" (†).
Theatre 6: "Aladdin" (†).

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"Flirting" (John Duigan).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Bram Stoker's Dracula" (†).

Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
Theatre 1: "The Distinguished Gentleman" (Jonathan Lynn), with Eddie Murphy.
Theatre 2: "The Distinguished Gentleman"
Theatre 3: "Aladdin" (†).
Theatre 4: "Glengarry Glen Ross" (†).

34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Malcolm X" (†).
Theatre 2: "Jennifer Eight" (Bruce Robinson), with Andy Garcia and Uma Thurman.
Theatre 3: "Passenger 57" (Kevin Hooks), with Wesley Snipes.

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
Through Dec. 10: "The Last of the Mohicans" (†).
From Dec. 11: "A Few Good Men" (†).

"The Muppet Christmas Carol"

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Under Siege" (†).

Sutton I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Theatre 1: "The Distinguished Gentleman" (Jonathan Lynn), with Eddie Murphy.
Theatre 2: "The Distinguished Gentleman."

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"The Last of the Mohicans" (†).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"Reservoir Dogs" (†).

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "Passenger 57" (Kevin Hooks), with Wesley Snipes.
Theatre 2: "Passenger 57."

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Jennifer Eight" (Bruce Robinson), with Andy Garcia and Uma Thurman.

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Hero" (Stephen Frears), with Dustin Hoffman, Geena Davis, and Andy Garcia.
Theatre 2: "Night and the City" (Irwin Winkler), with Robert De Niro.

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: "Aladdin" (†).
Theatre 2: "Bad Lieutenant" (Abel Ferrara), with Harvey Keitel.
Theatre 3: "Enchanted April" (†).

Art East Cinema, 1st Ave. at 61st. (644-1111)
"Venice/Venice" (Henry Jaglom).

First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd. (752-4600)
Theatre 1: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†).
Theatre 2: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†).
Theatre 3: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†).
Theatre 4: "Traces of Red" (Andy Wolk), with James Belushi.
Theatre 5: "Singles" (†).
Theatre 6: "Consenting Adults" (Alan J. Pakula), with Kevin Kline, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, and Kevin Spacey.

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Malcolm X" (†).
Theatre 2: "Malcolm X" (†).

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
Through Dec. 10: "Husbands and Wives" (Woody Allen).
From Dec. 11: "A Few Good Men" (†).

New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: Through Dec. 10: "A River Runs Through It" (†). From Dec. 11: "Love Field" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Bodyguard" (†).

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"Johnny Stecchino" (Roberto Benigni, in Italian), with Benigni.

Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Bram Stoker's Dracula" (†).

East 85th Street, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Jennifer Eight" (Bruce Robinson), with Andy Garcia and Uma Thurman.

Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)
Theatre 1: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†).
Theatre 2: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†).

Orpheum VII, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (876-2400)
Theatre 1: "Malcolm X" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Dec. 10: "Passenger 57" (Kevin Hooks), with Wesley Snipes. From Dec. 11: "A Few Good Men" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Bodyguard" (†).
Theatre 4: "Malcolm X" (†).
Theatre 5: "Bram Stoker's Dracula" (†).
Theatre 6: "Bram Stoker's Dracula" (†).
Theatre 7: "The Bodyguard" (†).

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1:"The Distinguished Gentleman" (Jonathan Lynn), with Eddie Murphy.
Theatre 2: "Aladdin" (†).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Theatre 1: Through Dec. 15: "Daddy and the Muscle Academy" (directed by Ilppo Pohjola, in English and Finnish) and "Time Expired" (Danny Leiner). From Dec. 16: A program of five short films.
Theatre 2: See listings under Revival Houses.
Theatre 3: "All About Eve" (1950, Joseph L. Mankiewicz), with Bette Davis and Anne Baxter.

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "The Last of the Mohicans" (†).
Theatre 2: "Of Mice and Men" (Gary Sinise), with John Malkovich and Sinise.

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Singles" (†).
Theatre 2: "Night and the City" (Irwin Winkler), with Robert De Niro.

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Becoming Colette" (Danny Huston), with Klaus Maria B randauer.
Theatre 2: "Under Siege" (†).
Theatre 3: "Husbands and Wives" (Woody Allen).
Theatre 4: "Bob Roberts" (Tim Robbins).

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)
Theatre 1: "Under Siege" (†).
Theatre 2: "Reservoir Dogs" (†).
Theatre 3: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†).

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MOVIE HOUSES—Cont'd

Theatre 4: "The Distinguished Gentleman" (Jonathan Lynn), with Eddie Murphy.
Theatre 5: "The Last of the Mohicans" (†).
Theatre 6: Through Dec. 10: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†). From Dec. 11: "A Few Good Men" (†).
Theatre 7: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†).
Theatre 8: "The Distinguished Gentleman."
Theatre 9: "Glengarry Glen Ross" (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "Malcolm X" (†).
Theatre 2: "Malcolm X" (†).
Theatre 3: Through Dec. 10: "Malcolm X" (†). From Dec. 11: "The Muppet Christmas Carol" (†).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Aladdin" (†).

Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)
Theatre 1: "Bob Roberts" (Tim Robbins).
Theatre 2: "Becoming Colette" (Danny Huston), with Klaus Maria Brandauer.
Theatre 3: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†).
Theatre 4: "Husbands and Wives" (Woody Allen).
Theatre 5: "The Last of the Mohicans" (†).
Theatre 6: "A River Runs Through It" (†).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Mr. Saturday Night" (Billy Crystal).

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"The Quarrel" (Eli Cohen).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Glengarry Glen Ross" (†).

Carnegie Hall Cinemas, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
Theatre 1: "Flirting" (John Duigan).
Theatre 2: "The Efficiency Expert" (Mark Joffe), with Anthony Hopkins.

Fine Arts, 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)
"The Lover" (†).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Howards End" (James Ivory).

Columbus Circle, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"The Crying Game" (†).

62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)
"Bram Stoker's Dracula" (†).

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Tous les Matins du Monde" (Alain Corneau, in French), with Jean-Pierre Marielle, Gérard Depardieu, Anne Brochet, and Guillaume Depardieu.
Theatre 2: "The Match Factory Girl" (Aki Kaurismaki).
Theatre 3: "Waterland" (†).
Theatre 4: "Intervista" (Federico Fellini, in Italian), with Marcello Mastroianni.
Theatre 5: "Tous les Matins du Monde."
Theatre 6: "Close to Eden" (Nikita Mikhalkov, in Russian).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†).

84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "The Bodyguard" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Distinguished Gentleman" (Jonathan Lynn), with Eddie Murphy.
Theatre 3: "Malcolm X" (†).
Theatre 4: "Malcolm X" (†).
Theatre 5: "Aladdin" (†).
Theatre 6: Through Dec. 10: "A River Runs Through It" (†). From Dec. 11: "A Few Good Men" (†).

Metro Cinema I and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: "Howards End" (James Ivory).
Theatre 2: "The Last of the Mohicans" (†).

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "Under Siege" (†).
Theatre 2: "Passenger 57" (directed by Kevin Hooks), with Wesley Snipes.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Under Siege" (†).
Theatre 2: "Malcolm X" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Bodyguard" (†).
Theatre 4: "Passenger 57" (directed by Kevin Hooks), with Wesley Snipes.
Theatre 5: "Malcolm X" (†).
Theatre 6: "The Bodyguard" (†).
Theatre 7: "Passenger 57."

Embassy I, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
"The Distinguished Gentleman" (Jonathan Lynn), with Eddie Murphy.

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 1: "The Distinguished Gentleman" (Jonathan Lynn), with Eddie Murphy.
Theatre 2: Through Dec. 10: "Jennifer Eight" (Bruce Robinson), with Andy Garcia. From Dec. 11: "The Muppet Christmas Carol" (†).
Theatre 3: "Consenting Adults" (Alan J. Pakula), with Kevin Kline, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, and Kevin Spacey.

Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"Bram Stoker's Dracula" (†).

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Dec. 10: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York" (†). From Dec. 11: "A Few Good Men" (†).

REVIVAL HOUSES

Film Forum 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Through Dec. 8: "The Quiet American" (1958, directed by Joseph L. Mankiewicz), with Audie Murphy and Michael Redgrave; and "Escape" (1948, Mankiewicz), with Rex Harrison and Peggy Cummins.
Dec. 9-10: "Manhattan Melodrama" (1934, W. S. Van Dyke), with Clark Gable, William Powell, and Myrna Loy; and "Mannequin" (1938, Frank Borzage), with Joan Crawford, Spencer Tracy, and Alan Curtis.
Dec. 11-12: "Dragonwyck" (1946, Joseph L. Mankiewicz), with Gene Tierney, Vincent Price, Walter Huston, and Glenn Langan; and "The Keys of the Kingdom" (†).
Dec. 13-14: "The Ghost and Mrs. Muir" (1947, Joseph L. Mankiewicz), with Gene Tierney and Rex Harrison; and "The Late George Apley" (1947, Mankiewicz), with Ronald Colman and Peggy Cummins.
Dec. 15-16: "Sleuth" (†) and "There Was a Crooked Man . . ." (†)

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
Dec. 7: "The Ritual" (1969, Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish); and "After the Rehearsal" (1984, Bergman; in Swedish).
Dec. 8: "The King of Marvin Gardens" (1972, Bob Rafelson), with Jack Nicholson, Bruce Dern, and Ellen Burstyn; and "Head" (1968, Rafelson), with the Monkees.
Dec. 9: "Murder, My Sweet" (1945, Edward Dmytryk), with Claire Trevor, Dick Powell, Mike Mazurki, and Anne Shirley; and "The Brasher Doubloon" (1947, John Brahm), with George Montgomery.
Dec. 10: "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof" (1958, Richard Brooks), with Elizabeth Taylor, Paul Newman, Burl Ives, Judith Anderson, Madeleine Sherwood, and Jack Carson; and "The Night of the Iguana" (1964, John Huston), with Richard Burton, Ava Gardner, Deborah Kerr, and Sue Lyon.
Dec. 11-12: "The Last Metro" (1981, François Truffaut; in French), with Catherine Deneuve, Gérard Depardieu, and Jean Poiret; and "Love on the Run" (1979, Truffaut; in French), with Jean-Pierre Léaud, Marie-France Pisier, and Claude Jade.
Dec. 13: "Notorious" (1946, Alfred Hitchcock), with Cary Grant and Ingrid Bergman; and "Spellbound" (1945, Hitchcock), with Bergman and Gregory Peck.
Dec. 14: "Illusion Travels by Streetcar" (1953, Luis Buñuel; in Spanish); and "The Criminal Life of Archibaldo de la Cruz" (†).
Dec. 15: "Double Indemnity" (1944, Billy Wilder), with Barbara Stanwyck, Fred MacMurray, and Edward G. Robinson; and "Sorry, Wrong Number" (1948, Anatole Litvak), with Stanwyck and Burt Lancaster.
Dec. 16: "Goldfinger" (1964, Guy Hamilton) and "From Russia with Love" (1964, Terence Young), both with Sean Connery.

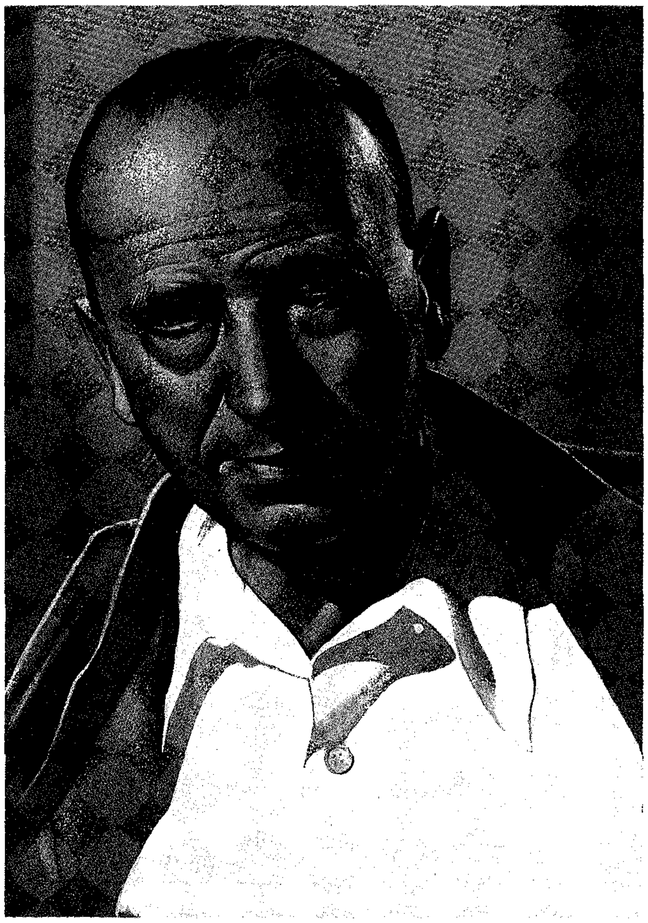
FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—Dec. 7 at 2:30: "The Third Degree" (1927, directed by Michael Curtiz). . . . ¶ Dec. 7 at 6 and

Dec. 8 at 2:30: “River's End” (1931, Curtiz), with Charles Bickford.... ¶ Dec. 7 at 6:30: A program of films by Carolee Schneemann, who will be present.... ¶ Dec. 8 at 6: “Noah's Ark” (1929, Curtiz).... ¶ Dec. 10 at 2:30 and Dec. 11 at 6: “Strange Love of Molly Louvain” (1932, Curtiz), with Lee Tracy, Ann Dvorak, and Leslie Fenton.... ¶ Dec. 10 at 3 and 6: “Face Value” (1991, Johan Van Der Keuken), a documentary.... ¶ Dec. 10 at 6 and Dec. 11 at 2:30: “God's Gift to Women” (1931, Curtiz), with Frank Fay, Laura LaPlante, Joan Blondell, and Louise Brooks; and “Woman from Monte Carlo” (1932, Curtiz), with Lil Dagover and Walter Huston.... ¶ Dec. 11 at 3 and Dec. 12 at 2:30: “The Marriage of Maria Braun” (1979, Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German), with Hanna Schygulla.... ¶ Dec. 12 at 2 and Dec. 15 at 2:30: “The Mystery of the Wax Museum” (†).... ¶ Dec. 12 at 5 and Dec. 14 at 2:30: “Cabin in the Cotton” (1932, Curtiz), with Bette Davis, Richard Barthelmess, and Dorothy Jordan.... ¶ Dec. 12 at 5 and Dec. 13 at 2:30: “Despair” (1979, Fassbinder), with Dirk Bogarde.... ¶ Dec. 13 at 2 and Dec. 14 at 6: “20,000 Years in Sing Sing” (†).... ¶ Dec. 13 at 5: “Goodbye Again” (1933, Curtiz), with Warren William and Blondell.... ¶ Dec. 13 at 5 and Dec. 14 at 3: “In a Year of 13 Moons” (1978, Fassbinder; in German).... ¶ Dec. 15 at 3 and 6: “On My Own” (1992, Antonio Tibaldi), with Judy David, Matthew Ferguson, and David McIlwraith.... ¶ Dec. 15 at 6: “The Keyhole” (1933, Curtiz), with Kay Francis, George Brent, and Glenda Farrell; and “Private Detective 62” (1933, Curtiz), with William Powell.

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—“The Legendary Film Scores of Bernard Herrmann.” Dec. 12 at 2: “On Dangerous Ground” (1952, Nicholas Ray), with Ida Lupino, Robert Ryan, and Ward Bond.... ¶ Dec. 12 at 4: “Taxi Driver” (1976, Martin Scorsese), with Robert De Niro.... ¶ Dec. 13 at 2: “Cape Fear” (1962; see below).... ¶ Dec. 13 at 4: “Cape Fear” (1991, Scorsese), with De Niro, Nick Nolte, and Jessica Lange.

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. (875-5600)—Dec. 8 at 2 and 6:30: “The White Rose” (1983, Michael Verhoeven; in German).... ¶ Dec. 8 at 4:30 and 9: “Metropolitan” (1990, Whit Stillman), with Edward Clements, Carolyn Farina, Christopher Eigeman, and Taylor Nicholas.... ¶ Dec. 9 at 2, 4:15, 6:30, and 9: “Let Him Have It” (1991, Peter Medak), with Tom Courtenay.... ¶ Dec. 10 at 2 and Dec. 11 at 2, 6, and 10: “Smithereens” (1982, Susan Seidelman), with Susan Berman.... ¶ Dec. 10 at 4 and Dec. 11 at 4 and 8: “Female Trouble” (1975, John Waters), with Divine.... ¶ Dec. 12-13 at 2: “The Polar Bear King” (1991, Ola Solum).... ¶ Dec. 12 at 4 and 7:30: “A Nightmare on Elm Street” (1984, Wes Craven), with John Saxon and Ronee Blakley.... ¶ Dec. 12 at 5:45 and 9:15: “The Evil Dead” (1983, Sam Raimi), with Bruce Campbell.... ¶ Dec. 13 at 4 and 8 and Dec. 14 at 4: “Beau Père” (1981, Bertrand Blier; in French), with Patrick Dewaere and Ariel Besse.... ¶ Dec. 13 at 6:15 and Dec. 14 at 2: “The Seduction of Mimi” (1972, Lina Wertmüller; in Italian), with Giancarlo Giannini.



At MOMA, a Michael Curtiz festival

BILL NELSON

MOVIES IN BRIEF

SEE PRECEDING PAGES FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS. IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

The Max Factor

THE original, 1962 “Cape Fear” (playing December 13, at the American Museum of the Moving Image) stars Robert Mitchum as Max Cady, a sadistic ex-con harassing lawyer Sam Bowden (Gregory Peck), whose testimony at a rape trial sent Cady to the slammer. It's a legal and psychological horror story about the limits of prior restraint. Cady terrorizes Bowden with the prospect of raping the lawyer's wife (Polly Bergen) and/or his teen-age daughter. But until the final showdown he uses lascivious suggestion; he stays within legal boundaries, waiting for the moment when he can commit mayhem without getting caught. Bowden is the one who oversteps the law, hiring thugs to take care of Cady.

What's amazing about the movie is Mitchum. He isn't just menacing, he's slickly—dankly—sexual, and he brings a smooth, insinuating rhythm to his acts of intimidation. His shrewdness and his sick sensuality keep an audience's sympathies out of balance. Mitchum plays Cady as a self-assured hipster in a panama hat, invading the bastions of a smug middle class. In his mind, *he's* the victim. Within its tight genre framework, this skillful adaptation of John D. MacDonald's “The Executioners,” directed by J. Lee Thompson, from a script by James R. Webb, is a smart package of controlled ambiguity. Unlike Martin Scorsese's laughably overblown and chaotic remake, Thompson's “Cape Fear” toys with our liberal and conservative impulses while remaining a first-rate scare movie.

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow.)

Aladdin—What makes this animated feature such intense, giddy fun is the eruption of uninhibited parody that Robin Williams provides as the voice of the Genie in Aladdin's lamp. Williams turns the Genie into a quick-change artist and mimic: to express his darting thoughts, he does lightning impersonations of everyone from William F. Buckley, Jr., to Arsenio Hall. The animators' quick-draw craftsmanship keeps up with Williams' breakaway creativity—the Genie mutates into dozens of variations on himself. Williams' spieling and spritzing acquire a lickety-split clarity and gleefully explode the dimensions of the fable. The directors, John Musker and Ron Clements, who collaborated on the screenplay with Ted Elliott and Terry Rossio, streamline the traditional Aladdin story into a contest between the boy and a towering vizier-wizard named Jafar, Aladdin's rival for the hand of the Sultan's daughter, Princess Jasmine. The film is sturdy and contemporary enough to support a wisecracking rendition of the fairy tale, a sendup of the campy Arabian Nights of Hollywood, and a full-fledged homage to the great 1940 “Thief of Bagdad,” which, like “Aladdin,” featured a wicked vizier and a toy-loving Sultan. With the voices of Scott Weinger, Linda Larkin, Jonathan Freeman, and Gilbert Gottfried (who unexpectedly triumphs as Jafar's tough parrot, Iago); composer Alan Menken contributes five songs, with lyrics by Tim Rice and the late Howard Ashman.—M.S. (Reviewed in our issue of 11/30/92.) (Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, Cinema I, 86th Street East Twin, Guild, and 84th Street Sixplex.)

The Bodyguard—With Kevin Costner and Whitney Houston, directed by Mick Jackson. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 19th Street East 6, New York Twin, Orpheum VII, 84th Streeet Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

Bram Stoker's Dracula—The filmmakers can't put this fiasco off on poor Stoker. What makes the picture so peerlessly ridiculous is the style, not the story. The screenplay, by James V. Hart (co-author of “Hook”), embellishes a simple, classic tale with killer-diller thrills and special-effects opportunities; and the director, Francis Ford Coppola, executes every dreadful idea with ferocious, near-fanatical enthusiasm. The movie is an orgy of fake blood, opera-house décor, and delirious film-lab wizardry, and it sustains a hysterical tone for an ungodly two hours and ten minutes. It's conceived as a vampire saga in the modern, eroticized manner—horror to make women swoon like Victorian maidens—but it

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FRATELLI
ROSSETTI

IN BRIEF—Cont'd

isn't very scary, and it isn't romantic. Gary Oldman, who plays Dracula, is perfectly opaque and remote in the seduction scenes: he has no sex appeal. (As the old Dracula, leering wrinkledly beneath a crullerlike coiffure, Oldman has his moments, though.) The picture just keeps coming at us indefatigably, unstoppably, as if it were pursuing us through eternity, and it leaves us feeling mysteriously drained. This is no ordinary movie: it has the appalling persistence of the undead. Also with Anthony Hopkins, Winona Ryder, Keanu Reeves, Sadie Frost, and Tom Waits.—T.R. (11/30/92) (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, Bay Cinema, Tower East, Orpheum VII, 62nd & Broadway, and Astor Plaza.)

THE CRIMINAL LIFE OF ARCHIBALDO DE LA CRUZ (1955)—Only intermittently amusing black comedy, made in Mexico by Luis Buñuel. Directed rather indifferently, though the story has a Buñuelian perversity—perhaps a little more giddy than usual. It has a wonderful start: Archibaldo finds a music box which reawakens his memories of a childhood experience. His governess had found him dressed up in his mother's clothes, and while she was bawling him out for it, a stray bullet from a revolution going on outside had killed her. This gratification of his desires gave him ecstasy. Later, Archibaldo keeps trying to recapture that sexual pleasure, but his attempts to commit murder are continually frustrated by the deaths of his intended victims. With Ernesto Alonso as the smiling dilettante and fantasist, Archibaldo, and Miroslava Stern as the amoral Lavinia. The script, by Buñuel and Eduardo Ugarte, is based on a story by Rodolfo Usigli. In Spanish.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Dec. 14.)

THE CRYING GAME—This amazing new movie by the Irish writer and director Neil Jordan ("Mona Lisa," "The Miracle") has the sure grip and the unstoppable momentum of a dream. Jordan tells the story of Fergus (Stephen Rea), a troubled I.R.A. gunman who undergoes a thorough emotional metamorphosis, and he makes the hero's change of heart moving and persuasive; the film inspires an irrational sort of trust, a willing suspension of something deeper and more fundamental than disbelief. The script is full of reversals and abrupt dislocations and, halfway through, the movie springs a huge, jaw-dropping surprise. Disorienting us isn't the ultimate aim of Jordan's artistic strategy, though; he jars us out of our accustomed responses to prepare us for the purer, more penetrating ones he really wants from us. The picture is a contemporary romantic thriller whose values are, in the best sense, medieval. Every startling twist in the plot functions as a trial for the hero; and in the end Fergus, having come through the fires of battle and through enchantments that alter the appearance of the familiar world, achieves a knightly grace. But you're not likely to think of the film's mythic overtones while you're watching it. The story is so unusual and so involving, and Jordan's direction is so envelopingly sensuous, that you allow the movie simply to carry you along. It's a splendid entertainment—an elating, charmed sprint through all sorts of contemporary terrors. Also with Forest Whitaker, Miranda Richardson, Jim Broadbent, Adrian Dunbar, and a newcomer named Jaye Davidson, who is astonishing.—T.R. (11/16/92) (Angelika Film Center, and Columbus Circle.)

ENCHANTED APRIL—Adapted by Peter Barnes from Elizabeth von Arnim's 1922 novel, this period romance has a healthy sprinkling of bewitchments. The lead characters are two proper middle-class English ladies, played by Josie Lawrence and Miranda Richardson, who, partly to get away from their husbands, pool their resources to rent an Italian villa named San Salvatore for a month. They ultimately share expenses with an austere, cultured widow (Joan Plowright) and a gorgeous, bored aristocrat (Polly Walker). Italy

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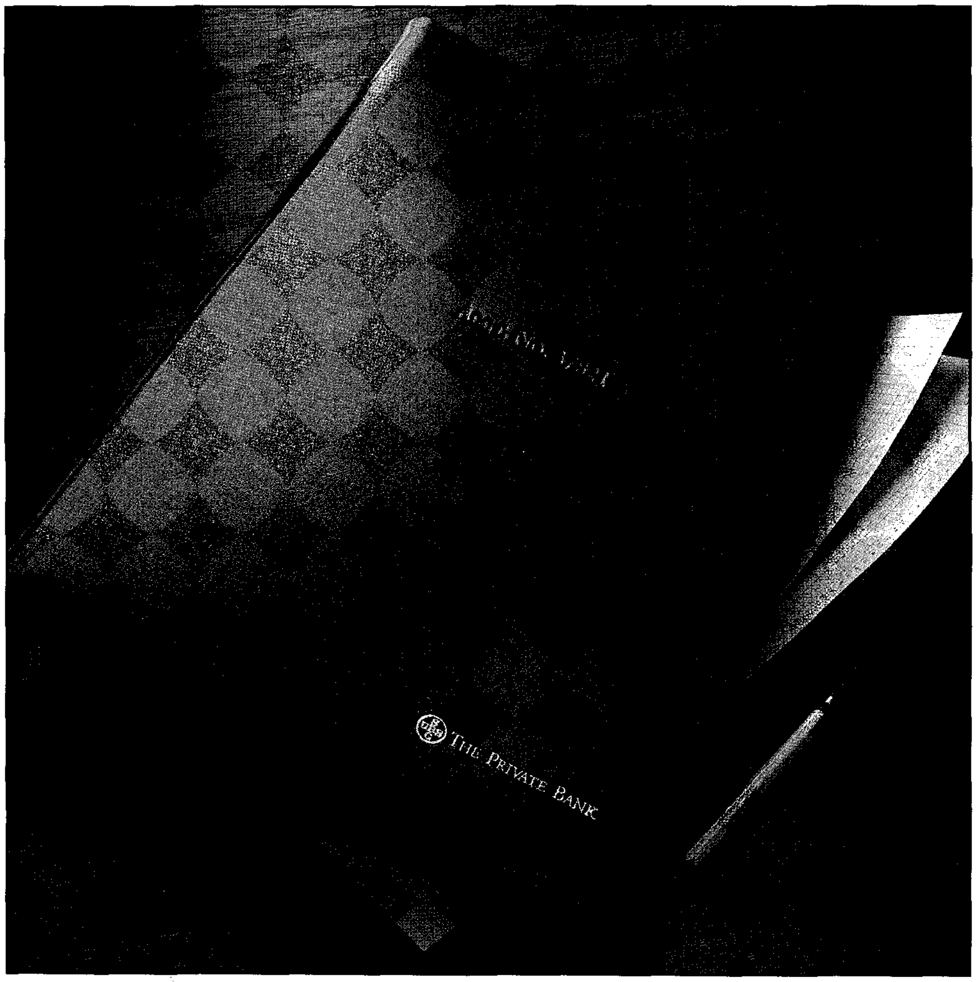

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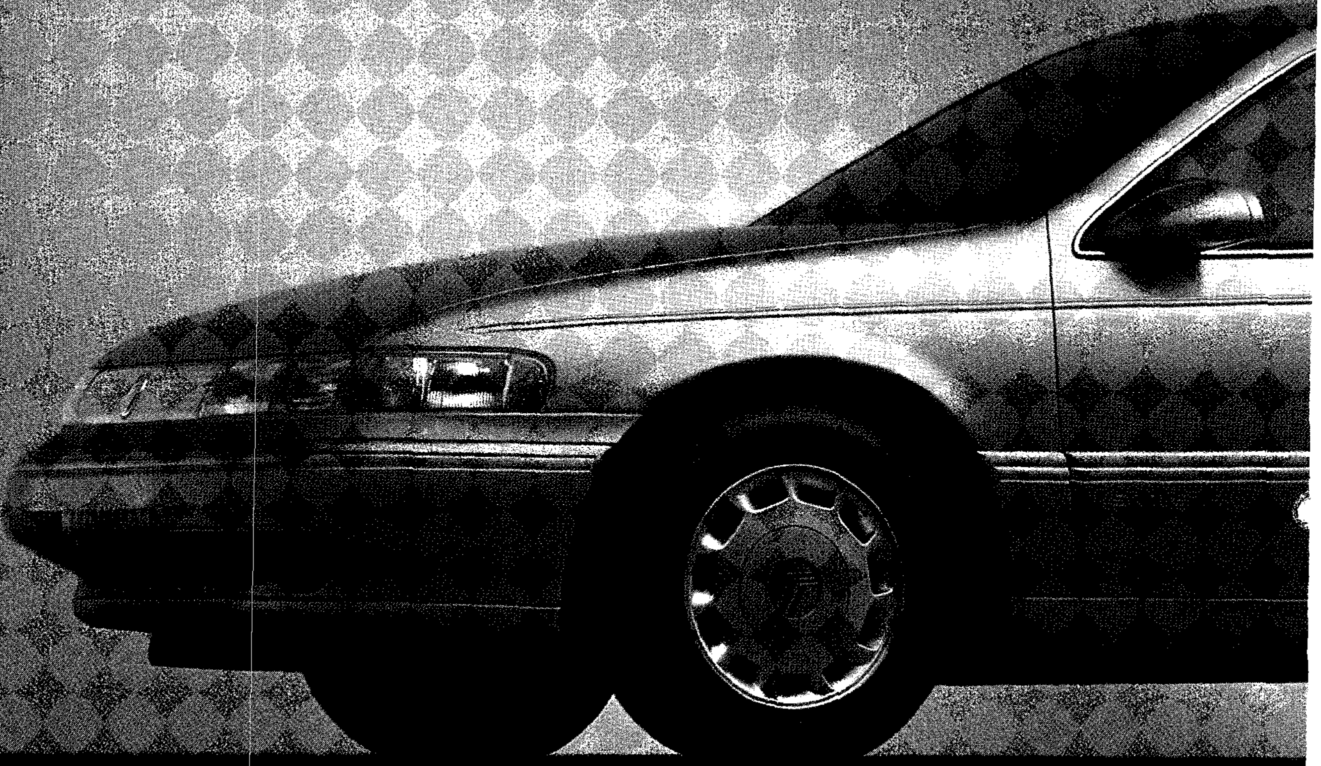

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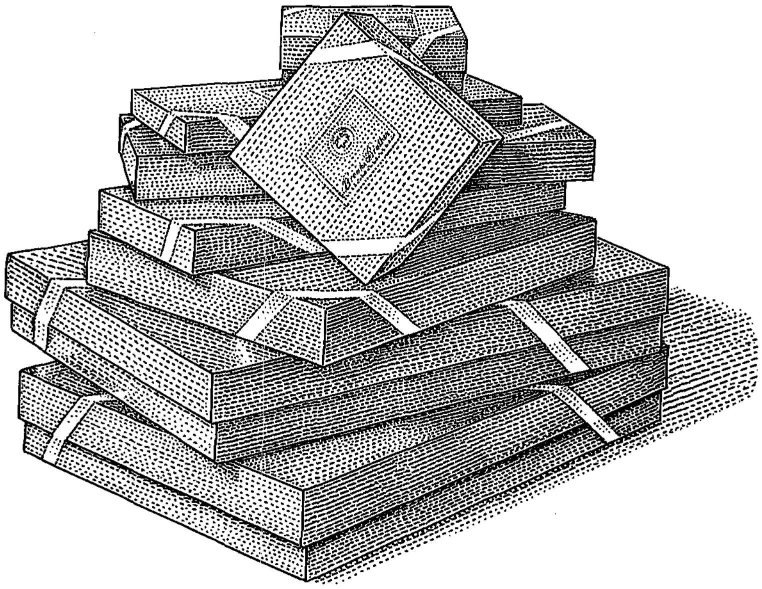

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IN BRIEF–Cont'd

awakens the women's sensuality and imagination, and gives them perspective; Lawrence and Richardson end up jolting their deadhead husbands (played by Alfred Molina and Jim Broadbent) back to life. The director, Mike Newell, handles the performers deftly and sympathetically, from the wonderfully ebullient Lawrence and the ravishing Walker to the robustly comical Plowright; Michael Kitchen contributes a tour de force of eccentric charm as the villa's owner. If the film, with its brittle, satiric London scenes and its expansive Italian ones, breaks too distinctly into pieces, the magic of the sunnier locations seals the cracks.—M.S. (8/10/92) (Angelika Film Center, and Cinema 3rd Avenue.)

A FEW GOOD MEN—With Tom Cruise, Demi Moore, and Jack Nicholson; directed by Rob Reiner. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Village Theatre VII, 34th St. East, Beekman, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and National Twin; starting Dec. 11.)

GLENGARRY GLEN ROSS—David Mamet's 1984 Pulitzer Prize winner—about real-estate salesmen who put the screws on hapless marks in order to keep their own ugly jobs—made ripping theatre, whatever else it was or wasn't. But the movie, set in the lean Bush years, spells out the characters' despair in cue cards, right from the start, and hammers away at the plot so relentlessly that you can feel the nails entering the back of your skull. Still, the performers provide relief. Ed Harris and Alan Arkin, as the sleek yet panicky Moss and the sad-sack Aaronow, turn their "Are we speaking or are we talking?" duet into an existential Abbott-and-Costello number. Al Pacino, as Roma, Mamet's Mr. Slick, is amusingly lordly: he's simultaneously high-handed and underhanded. And Kevin Spacey, as their steely office manager, Williamson, plants a daringly long fuse and ignites it with the smallest flicker. Only Jack Lemmon, as Shelley (the Machine) Levene, disappoints: he starts strong, but the director, James Foley, lets him drown in unearned emotion, as if this were Lemmon's shot at "Death of a Salesman." Mamet did his own adaptation, adding another ruthless person to the melodrama: a head-office hit man played by Alec Baldwin.—M.S. (10/5/92) (Village East Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, and 57th St. Playhouse.)

HOME ALONE 2: LOST IN NEW YORK—The director, Chris Columbus, and the producer-writer, John Hughes, use the first "Home Alone" as a template. Leaning hard on the sensitive-brat charm of the eleven-year-old Macaulay Culkin, they duplicate and exaggerate every laugh-getting, tearjerking separation and reunion, every crowd-pleasing gibe and gambit. This time, young Kevin McCallister mistakenly boards a plane to Gotham while his folks fly off to Miami for their Christmas vacation. The filmmakers pump up the volume on the schmalz and sadism, hoping to attain a hyperbolic balance. What they achieve is double overkill. Culkin is directed as if he were an animatronic doll. He screams, he pouts, he proclaims "Yes!" Either you're captivated or you want to muzzle him. The new characters include Brenda Fricker as a homeless woman who devotes herself to pigeons, and Tim Curry, Dana Ivey, and Rob Schneider as nincompoop hotel workers. The repeat performers include Catherine O'Hara and John Heard (as Kevin's parents), and Joe Pesci and Daniel Stern (as Kevin's slapstick nemeses).—M.S. (11/30/92) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, Regency, and National Twin.)

THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM (1944)—Hollywood at its most virtuous. This account of the adventurous life of a nineteenth-century Scottish priest—a missionary in China—is like an ad for piety. The humble hero keeps telling people what an uninteresting sort of man he is, and with Gregory Peck in the role we believe it. His saintliness comes across as lack of imagination—utter sterility. How did Joseph L. Mankiewicz and Nunnally Johnson get trapped into writing the script, which is based on A. J. Cronin's novel? (You couldn't find two writers less suited, by temperament, to inspirational moviemaking.) The director, John M. Stahl, sets a slow, sanctimonious pace and holds to it, with Peck's beautiful, uncharismatic face lighted "from within." (He glows, hollowly.) This is perhaps the most dignified and sexless performance ever given by a rising young male star. With Cedric Hardwicke, Edmund Gwenn, Thomas Mitchell, Peggy Ann Garner, Roddy McDowall, Rose Stradner, Anne Revere, Ruth Nelson, Benson Fong, James Gleason, Sara Allgood, Edith Barrett, Abner Biberman, Vincent Price, Ruth Ford, Richard Loo, and Arthur Shields. Music by Alfred Newman.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; Dec. 11-12.)

The Last of the Mohicans—In Michael Mann's version of James Fenimore Cooper's improbably durable tall tale, everybody looks great: the movie seduces us with haircuts and landscape. The hero of this melodramatic story of pre-Revolutionary America is Hawkeye (Daniel Day-Lewis), a rugged but sensitive individualist who roams the forest of the Hudson Valley in the company of two Indians, Chingachgook (Russell Means) and Uncas (Eric Schweig). The three men serve as guides and bodyguards for Cora and Alice Munro (Madeleine Stowe and Jodhi May), the maidenly daughters of a British officer. The Brits are at war with the French, but the greatest danger to Anglo-Saxon life and limb is posed by a band of bloodthirsty Indian guerrillas, led by a wily Huron named Magua (Wes Studi). The setup pretty much guarantees thrills, and Mann delivers the action-movie goods, but with a sort of abstract, lyrical pictorialism. Day-Lewis's Hawkeye—a cultured white man's dream of virile primitivism—is almost entirely a visual phenomenon, and it works. (He runs well, and sports a terrific mane of straight, stringy alternative-rocker hair.) The picture is awfully, solemnly silly, but it's enjoyable and even rather stirring. Also with Maurice Roëves and Steven Waddington.—T.R. (10/5/92) (Gotham Cinema, Waverly, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, and Metro Cinema. . . . ¶ 34th St. East; through Dec. 10.)

Love Field—With Michelle Pfeiffer and Dennis Haysbert, directed by Jonathan Kaplan. (Reviewed in this issue.) (New York Twin; starting Dec. 11.)

The Lover—Jean-Jacques Annaud's version of Marguerite Duras's autobiographical novel, about her sexual coming of age in 1929 Saigon, is a singularly empty moviegoing experience. Annaud simply illustrates the love story of the Young Girl (Jane March) and the Chinese Man (Tony Leung), and uses Duras's narration (spoken by Jeanne Moreau) whenever he's absolutely pressed to articulate what's happening. The director's point of attack isn't acute enough to clarify the tensions in the Girl's family and the chaos of colonial Indochina; as the Man proclaims his love and the Girl tries out her budding wiles on him, the film becomes a game of "She loves me, she loves me not." Although the stars expose their bodies with aplomb, Annaud stages their grappling so self-consciously, with so few undercurrents to carry you along, that you tire of their flesh. Screenplay by Annaud and Gerard Brach.—M.S. (11/16/92) (Fine Arts.)

Malcolm X—There's a great deal of passion in Spike Lee's three-hour-and-twenty-minute adaptation of "The Autobiography of Malcolm X," but it's not an artist's passion; the responses Lee aims for are the clear, pedagogically effective ones rather than the disturbing, irresolvable ones that Malcolm's own account evokes on almost every page. Malcolm, who achieved fame in the early sixties as a compelling spokesman for the black-pride philosophy of the Nation of Islam, is an unlikely hero for a big-studio prestige picture: he begins as a predatory street criminal, becomes a studious Muslim ascetic, and fulfills himself as a scourge. The movie is disappointingly impersonal; it doesn't provide readers of the autobiography anything like a fresh vision of its remarkable subject. Lee assumes Malcolm's greatness and then simply illustrates it. His approach isn't radical enough to give shape and coherence to Malcolm's internal conflicts; and the ponderous rhythms of the great-man bio-pic only emphasize the impossibility of rendering this story with conventional movie-narrative means. Denzel Washington's performance as Malcolm gets off to a rocky start—for the first hour, he's required to play the hero as a teen-ager—but it gains authority as the movie goes along. This film's Malcolm isn't so much a character as an image: a statue for us to look up at in wonder. Also with Angela Bassett, Delroy Lindo, Albert Hall, Spike Lee, and Al Freeman, Jr. (a wonderfully sly turn as the hero's mentor, Elijah Muhammad). The script, credited to Lee and Arnold Perl, incorporates (haphazardly) scenes and ideas from a scenario written more than twenty years ago by James Baldwin. The original score, by the jazz trumpeter Terence Blanchard, is brilliant.—T.R. (11/30/92) (Village Theatre VII, 34th Street Showplace, Gemini, Orpheum VII, 23rd St. West Triplex, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

The Muppet Christmas Carol—Directed by Brian Henson. (See illustration on page 30.) (23rd St. West Triplex, and Embassy; starting Dec. 11.)

My New Gun—The heroine of Stacy Cochran's movie is a young New Jersey housewife named Debbie Bender (Diane Lane), whose husband buys her a revolver she doesn't want. This husband, Gerald (Stephen Collins), is a smug radiologist who dominates his wife completely: when he announces that the Bender household—a condo overlooking a golf course—needs a firearm, that's it. The gun itself is a little more than a pretext and a lot less than a symbol: it serves mostly to get her involved in the mysterious life of her across-the-street neighbor, Skippy (James LeGros), a scruffy, shifty-eyed young man who has a big crush on her. LeGros is wonderfully sly and seductive, and Diane Lane's delicately funny performance conveys the movie's exploratory sensibility with thrilling clarity: she makes us feel the risky joy of venturing beyond your own narrow plot and becoming a part of someone else's story. Cochran—a recent film-school graduate—gives the dull suburban setting a surprising richness and beauty. Her condoland isn't a satirist's world, or a cartoonist's, or a fairy-tale teller's; it's more like a novelist's. Yet the sort of liberation that this picture proposes, and embodies, is the product of a true filmmaker's vision. Also with Tess Harper, Maddie Corman, Bruce Altman, and Bill Raymond. Ed Lachman's cinematography is terrific.—T.R. (11/2/92) (Angelika Film Center.)

The Mystery of the Wax Museum (1933)—Marvellously grisly chiller, directed by Michael Curtiz and shot in an early Technicolor process, with the color contributing to the general creepiness. Lionel Atwill is the murderous curator who pours hot wax over his manacled, still-living victims and then exhibits them as sculpture. With Glenda Farrell, Fay Wray, Gavin Gordon, Frank McHugh, Edwin Maxwell, and Arthur Edmund Carewe. From a play by Charles S. Belden. (Remade in 1953 in 3-D as "House of Wax," and probably the source of the 1959 "A Bucket of Blood.")—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; Dec. 12 and 15.)

Reservoir Dogs—Most of the action in Quentin Tarantino's pulp crime movie takes place in a cavernous warehouse, to which the surviving participants of a botched jewelry heist have repaired to lick their wounds. The crooks amuse themselves by accusing each other of treachery (*someone* tipped off the police), waving their guns, screaming obscenities, and torturing a cop whom one of them has captured. This is, explicitly, a man's world. Tarantino emphasizes the characters' absurdity; they're all presented as demented children, little boys with big guns.

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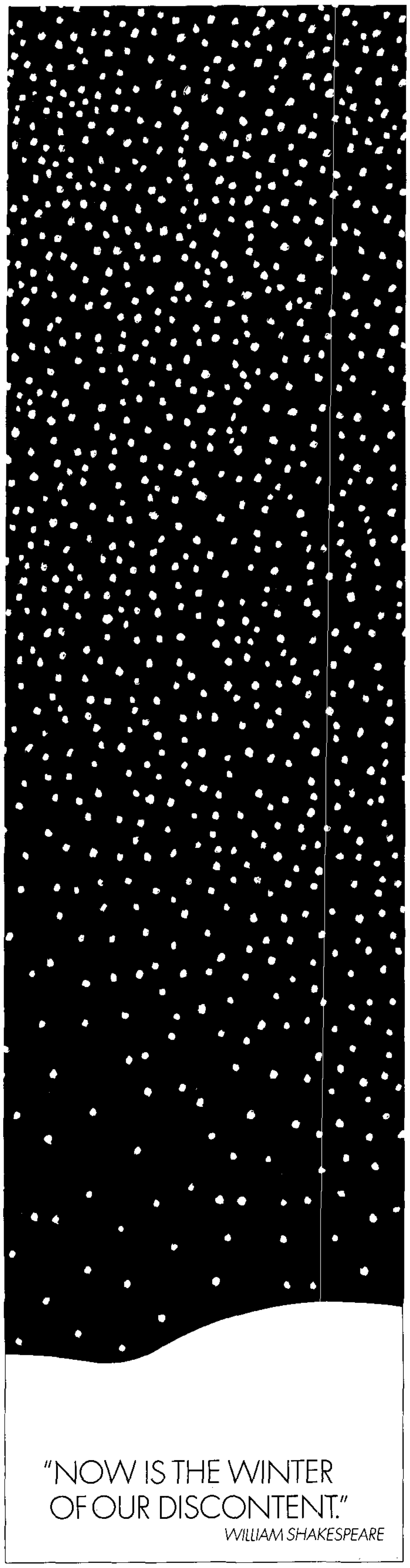
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FOX
OF SCANDINAVIA

IN BRIEF—Cont'd

He wants us to feel as if we had crash-landed in an alternate universe: the Planet of the Goons. The movie runs on film-school cleverness—a homemade pharmaceutical cocktail of pop music, visual jolts, and allusions to Scorsese and Peckinpah. As supercool young directors go, Tarantino (whose first film this is) is fairly engaging: his nihilism is antic and oddly cheery. But the picture is less than the sum of its outrageous gags and inventive bits of business. This is a reasonably lively picture about nothing, and that's apparently just what it was meant to be. With Harvey Keitel, Tim Roth, Steve Buscemi, Michael Madsen, Lawrence Tierney, and Chris Penn.—T.R. (10/19/92) (Village Theatre VII, Plaza, and Chelsea Cinemas.)

A River Runs Through It—Robert Redford's movie of Norman Maclean's lyrical novella about fly-fishing and family loyalty in Montana is serene, lulling, tranquil—no, it's dead dull. Maclean's story traces the history of its narrator's relationship with his self-destructive kid brother, Paul, through detailed descriptions of their fishing trips; the narrative is driven by the tension between what it's telling us and what it's leaving out. Disastrously, Redford and screenwriter Richard Friedenberg open up the story. They show us too much of what's happening offstage—that is, away from the river—and thus allow the real source of the story's emotions to dissipate. With a delicately balanced narrative like this one, more is inevitably less. The movie is ravishingly shot (by Philippe Rousselot), but it's lifeless, because it lacks the vital spirit of Maclean's writing: the precision and grace that he seems to have learned, in part, from fly-fishing. Redford and Friedenberg try to catch the story's elusive meanings by lobbing grenades into the river and blowing everything in it out into the light of day. With Craig Sheffer as the narrator, Norman, and Brad Pitt (who looks like a young Redford and gives a lightweight performance) as Paul. The supporting cast includes Emily Lloyd, Tom Skerritt, Stephen Shellen, Nicole Burdette, Brenda Blethyn, and Susan Traylor.—T.R. (10/19/92) (Village Theatre VII, and Worldwide Cinemas. . . . ¶ New York Twin, and 84th Street Sixplex; *through Dec 10.*)

Singles—Cameron Crowe's second film as a writer-director (the first was the lovely 1989 teen comedy "Say Anything") is a buoyant, sweet-tempered little picture about the romantic confusions of some young Seattle apartment-dwellers. It's an ensemble piece, the sort of movie that flits from character to character like a hummingbird. Crowe's touch is so light that you may, in the end, feel a bit unsatisfied—disappointed that the movie's buzzing comic vitality starts to lose its resonance the moment you leave the theatre. This is romantic comedy of the wispiest kind, but the picture is generous, graceful, and consistently funny. Campbell Scott and Kyra Sedgwick play Steve and Linda, idealistic yuppies in love, and both prove to be wonderfully deft comedians. And Matt Dillon, as Cliff, the rather dim leader of a band called Citizen Dick, is hilarious. But the standout in Crowe's energetic cast is Bridget Fonda, who plays Janet, a bubbly underachiever inexplicably smitten with Cliff. Fonda is a true original: she brings such reckless, joyous abandon to Janet's pursuit of the unlikely object of desire that she transforms this desperate-love story line into something exuberantly optimistic. This movie shows that Cameron Crowe is a rare bird, too: a sunny realist.—T.R. (First & 62nd Cinemas, and Art Greenwich Twin.)

Sleuth (1972)—At first, the elation of seeing Laurence Olivier in a big role is sufficient to give this Joseph L. Mankiewicz transcription of the Anthony Shaffer play (about an eccentric author of detective novels and his prey—Michael Caine) a high spirit, and Olivier seems to be having a ripsnorting old time. But the cleverness of Shaffer's excessive literacy wears down, and the stupid tricks that the two characters play on each other keep grinding on. It's Olivier in the kind of material he outgrew more than thirty years ago—it's Olivier in a George Sanders role. Cinematography by Oswald Morris.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; Dec. 15-16.)

There Was a Crooked Man . . . (1970)—This example of commercialized black-comedy nihilism seems to have been written by an evil two-year-old, and it has been directed in the Grand Rapids style of filmmaking. The story plays murderous double-crossing games until any characters with a decent impulse are dead fools or have become crooked. There's nobody to root for but Kirk Douglas, a red-haired jokester-killer who is sent to a territorial prison in the Arizona desert in the eighteen-eighties; he makes a fool of Henry Fonda, the warden, who is changing the prison from a brutalizing place into a decent one, and he makes corpses of his buddies. Written by David Newman and Robert Benton; directed by Joseph L. Mankiewicz. With Hume Cronyn, Warren Oates, Burgess Meredith, Lee Grant, Alan Hale, Arthur O'Connell, John Randolph, Martin Gabel, Bert Freed, and Gene Evans. Cinematography by Harry Stradling, Jr.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; Dec. 15-16.)

20,000 Years in Sing Sing (1933)—Spencer Tracy as a wise-guy hood, and Bette Davis as his vulnerable, sweet-tough moll. This Warners mixture of social reform, comedy, and sentimentality was very loosely based on a book by Warden Lewis E. Lawes; the plot creaks, but the director, Michael Curtiz, keeps things moving. The cast includes Lyle Talbot, Louis Calhern, Arthur Byron, and Warren Hymer as Hype.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; Dec. 13-14.)

Under Siege—Steven Seagal clips off his trademark ponytail to play a dangerous Navy cook—a former SEAL—in this slapdash seafaring adventure, directed by Andrew Davis and written by J. F. Lawton ("Pretty Woman"). Although the movie strives for the humor and sophistication lacking in previous Seagal vehicles, the main difference between this and Seagal's earlier hits is that he spends much of the running time offscreen. Tommy Lee Jones, as the renegade C.I.A. operative who commandeers Seagal's ship (the U.S.S. Missouri), comes up with a comic surprise or two. Too bad the plotting and the staging are so limply cartoonish that Jones and Seagal don't even engage in a satisfying bout of duelling eyebrows. With Gary Busey.—M.S. (11/16/92) (Eastside Cinema, Quad Cinema, Chelsea Cinemas, Olympia, and Criterion Center.)

Waterland—Tom Crick (Jeremy Irons), the protagonist and narrator of Stephen Gyllenhaal's film, is a middle-aged history teacher immobilized by his own past—by the dire events of his wartime adolescence in the fen country of East Anglia. The 1983 novel, by Graham Swift, from which the picture has been adapted is a determinedly inward-looking work: unpromising material for a film. And this hero—a hopeless, defeated, rumpled-corduroy man, marking time as he slides inexorably toward decrepitude and merciful oblivion—isn't the sort that movie audiences tend to clasp to their bosoms. Yet the picture is, in its gray way, absorbing and often moving. The screenwriter, Peter Prince, has streamlined the novel's twisty narrative very intelligently. (He retains the book's juiciest, most lurid episodes.) Gyllenhaal's direction is occasionally too studied, but it has some drive. And the actors are awfully good. Grant Warnock and Lena Headey, the young performers who play Tom and his wife-to-be in flashback sequences, bring a convincing and touching adolescent gravity to their roles. Irons imparts a whiff of something like madness to his character's middle-aged desperation, and thus saves it from seeming just another incarnation of the dull, low-horizon resignation familiar to audiences of English films and fiction about educated losers. His performance lifts the movie to the top of the rueful-retrospection class. Also with Sinead Cusack, David Morrissey, Ethan Hawke, and John Heard.—T.R. (11/2/92) (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

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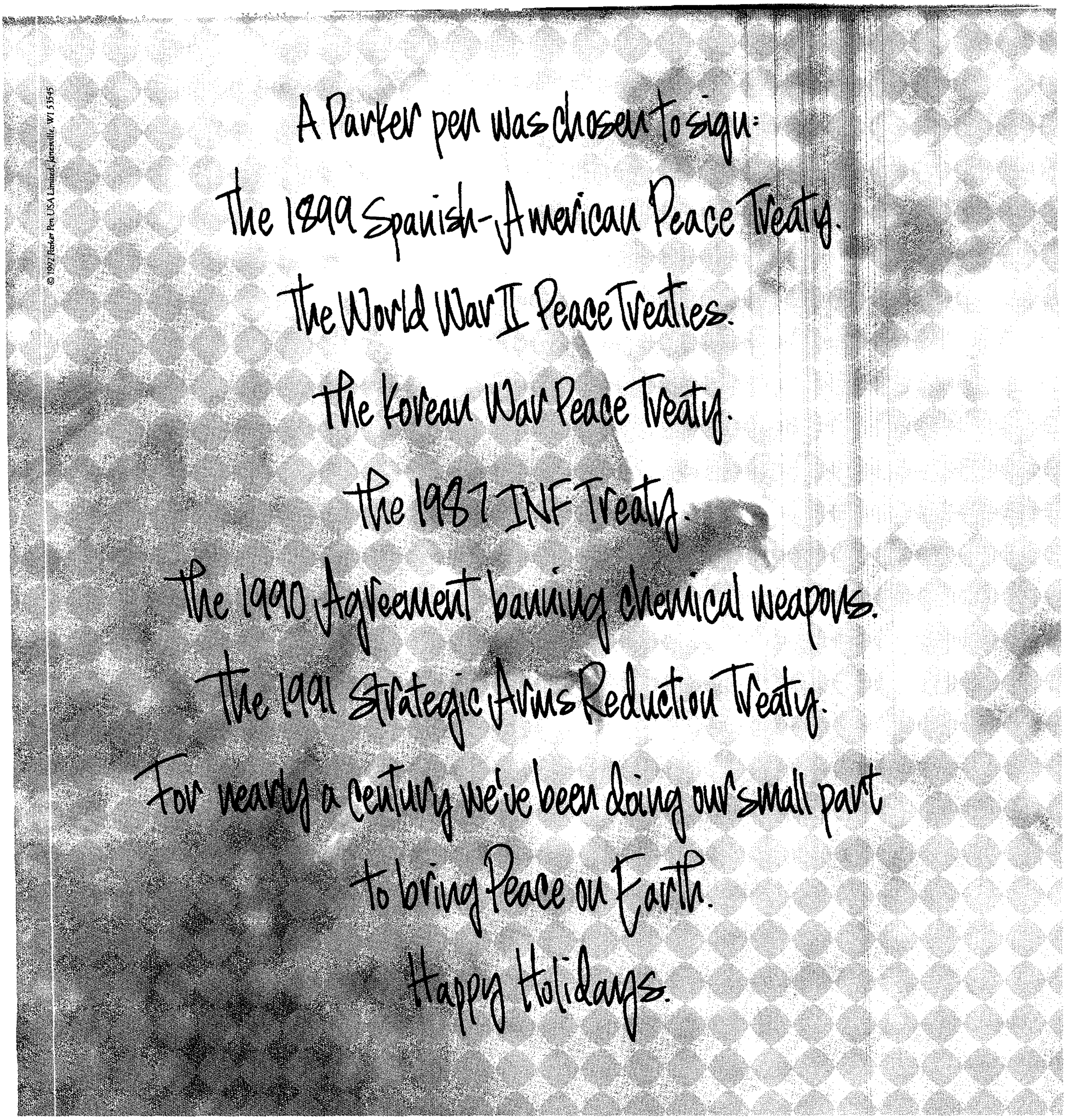

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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

OH, BROTHER

Roger Clinton, the President-elect's half brother, is beginning to look like trouble. An intimation of this came in a recent interview he gave to the *Post*, in which he said he was thinking of taking up singing as a full-time career. "I have a good rapport with a crowd, and a God-given ability to communicate, especially onstage," he explained. "I'm always moving, and I have a lot of rhythm. I have a lot of God-given charisma." A college dropout who once served a year in prison for distributing cocaine, Roger Clinton is currently employed by his brother's friends Harry Thomason and Linda Bloodworth-Thomason as a production assistant on their television shows. But now the big time seems to beckon.

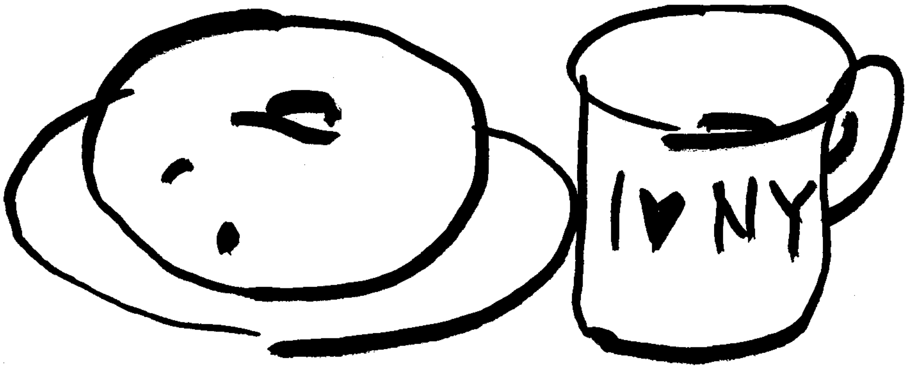
Among his would-be sponsors are a clutch of journalists from *Esquire*, who after hearing him perform at the Democratic Convention in July formed a company called Snarling Jackass Productions, with the sole purpose of trying to inveigle him into a record deal. They got off to an excellent start, inducing Mr. Clinton to cut a demonstration tape with a band called the Memphis Boys (who actually live in Nashville). He recorded a song of his own composition, enticingly called "Brother, Brother," which was subsequently played on the famous Don Imus radio talk show. But fortunes are not so easily made, and the six partners in Snarling Jackass soon found themselves in dispute with a person claiming to be Roger Clinton's long-standing manager—a man from Arkansas in a Rolling Stones T-shirt who is called Butch Stone.

The two sides met for dinner—to sort things out—at the Planet Hollywood restaurant, on West Fifty-seventh Street, and it quickly became clear that the two brash Southerners, Mr. Clinton and Mr. Stone, had an idea about striking out on their own. They hinted that they had been discussing a five-album deal with Atlantic Records and a movie with Dan Aykroyd. Whatever the truth of these claims, the entrepreneurs from *Esquire* concluded that they had seen the last of their investment, which amounted to two hundred and fifty dollars each.

Most of them had no regrets. "Every penny's been well spent," Will Blythe, the literary editor of *Esquire*, said later. "To have had the only Roger Clinton demo tape around for at least three days was kind of fun. He's a pretty good singer." David Hirshey, the second-in-command at *Esquire*, seemed delighted by Mr. Clinton's colossal appetite and his back-slapping manner. "The other key point is that he's willing to do 'Wooo, pig, sooo-y' at the drop of a hat," Michael Hirschorn, a senior editor at *Esquire*, said. And, indeed, Mr. Clinton gave a deafening rendition of this traditional Arkansas Razorback football cheer in the middle of the Planet Hollywood restaurant.

THE MAN FROM HAMPTON

Meanwhile, over the Thanksgiving weekend Bill and Hillary Clinton were in California celebrating their friendship with the Thomasons, who had contributed so much to their election victory. On Saturday evening, Harry Thomason was coaxed, with difficulty, out of his holiday beach house in Santa Barbara to attend a dreary-sounding black-tie dinner in the Ritz Carlton Hotel in Pasadena, supposedly being given in the President-elect's honor by the National Education Association. It turned out to be a surprise party for Harry Thomason himself, and when he walked into the Grand Ballroom he was greeted with shouts of "Happy Birthday" by some two hundred relatives and friends, including Bill and Hillary Clinton, who, in a setup similar to the one he had arranged for the Clintons' triumphal procession down Seventh Avenue into the Democratic Convention, had been able to watch his protracted and despondent arrival on two huge television



PATRICK BLACKWELL

screens. "I was the beard," Bill Clinton said later. "Which is why they call me Slick Willie."

In another echo of the election campaign, there was a showing of "The Man from Hampton," a film of Harry Thomason's rise from small-town Arkansas beginnings to become the now famous sitcom king. This was a deliberate parody of "The Man from Hope," the tearjerking campaign film of Bill Clinton's parallel rise, which was created by Thomason's sitcom queen, Linda; and to end the new film she performed a cartwheel and a split while singing "I'm Just Wild About Harry." Mr. Clinton explained to the guests, "Hampton is the county seat of the smallest county of what George Bush called 'that small Southern state.' I mean, if you live in that county you're so far out in the country you've got to come toward town just to go hunting. Hampton makes Hope, Arkansas, look like Paris. Once, Hillary and I were in a county-fair parade in Hampton, and they dressed a guy up in a tuxedo with a Ronald Reagan mask, and they put him in a limousine, and they had all these real stiff guys walking along the side like Secret Service agents, and half the people in the county still think I'm the second President to visit the county."

Then the Clintons, along with everyone else, danced to Motown. Hillary joined Linda onstage to belt out "That's What Friends Are For." A conga line formed. Birthday cake was served. Bill played the saxophone. Then, at two in the morning, having finally retired to his room, the President-elect ordered pizza.

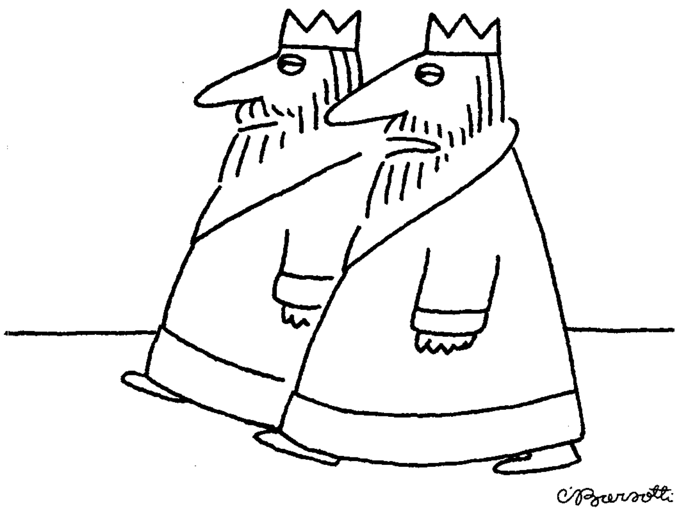
DELI NEWS

As Mortimer B. Zuckerman continues his agonizing negotiations with the unions for the purchase of the *Daily News*, he likes to tell a story that, if such a thing were possible, would be highly deleterious to the reputation of the paper's last purchaser, the late and widely unlamented Robert Maxwell. The story goes as follows: During a recent negotiating bout at the *News* headquarters, on East Forty-second Street, talks dragged on into the evening, and at eight-thirty Mr. Zuckerman asked his right-hand man, Fred Drasner, to order a supply of sandwiches from the Carnegie Deli. Mr. Drasner, to his surprise, was told by the person at the end of the line that the sandwiches would have to be paid for with cash on delivery. Why? he asked. The *News* was good for the money. It was explained to him that only C.O.D. was acceptable because Robert Maxwell, during similar negotiations, had accumulated a debt of eight thousand dollars for sandwiches, and he had died without paying it.

The really curious thing about this story, though, is that Milt Parker, the owner of the Carnegie Deli, flatly denies it. While he confirms that Mr. Zuckerman did order sandwiches, and he accepts the possibility that the C.O.D. demand may have been made by an employee unaware of Mr. Zuckerman's wealth and fame, he insists adamantly that Mr. Maxwell never placed an order with the Carnegie Deli and never therefore owed it any money. Not only in the big matter of his death in the Atlantic but in all matters, even the smallest, Mr. Maxwell managed to generate mysteries, and most of them seem to have survived him.

BOOKWORM

There are other Maxwells in this world, and one of them is alive and kicking in Washington, D.C. Washington, for all its apparent flash, is an incremental, detail-oriented town, and Frederic Alan Maxwell is a certain type of Washingtonian. His mother was a librarian, and he himself is animated, in a quirky way, by the pursuit and accumulation of data. He enjoys lists, and he will tell you he is "thirty-eight point three years old." He was asked to appear on "Jeopardy!," but couldn't, because a stranger concussed him on the street. He served on the staff of Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Chief of Naval Operations, at the age of nineteen, and subsequently studied at seven different universities for a multitude of degrees, but completed his studies for only one of them.

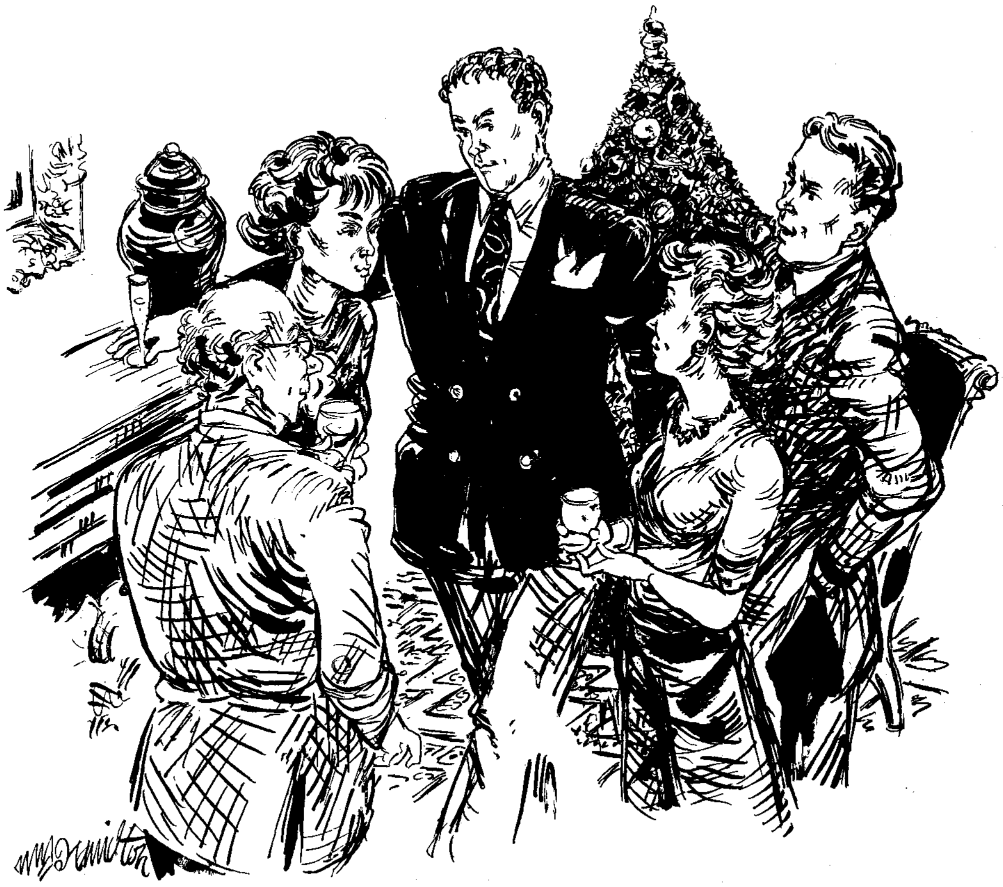


"There's a lesson for us. If you don't chop off a few heads now and then, you'll end up paying taxes."

Maxwell says he looks like Mark Twain, and that's almost right. He has masses of soft curly hair, and strong eyebrows like those you see in pictures of Twain when he was a young man. Maxwell is a writer, too, and he hunches his shoulders when he talks, as Twain may have done. Today, he is mailing a Christmas gift of recycled manure from Washington's National Zoo (for use as fertilizer, at two dollars per bag) to his editor in New York—an action that Twain might have appreciated. He has a beard; Twain did not. He smokes; Twain did. He wears trim khaki trousers and white Reebok shoes; Twain did not.

In March of 1986, Maxwell spent seventeen hours in the District of Columbia jail. The guards searched him repeatedly. For breakfast, he received two crusty baloney sandwiches. The roots of this punishment are complex, but ultimately Maxwell was arrested for failing to leave his seat in the main reading room of the Library of Congress. In March of that year, under budget pressure from the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings act, library officials announced that public reading hours would be curtailed. The weekday closing time would be moved from 9:30 P.M. to 5:30, except on Wednesday. On Sundays, the library would be closed all day.

Mark Twain described the Library of Congress as "that great literary storehouse." Maxwell will go further. He calls it "my love, the library." He often spends twelve-hour days, between cigarette breaks, poking through the stacks.



"We're terribly excited—Macaulay Culkin is reading Susannah's novel."

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Around the time of his incarceration, he was a free-lance researcher, and spent such days looking into old mineral-rights claims and combing ancient phone books. "I just know if I dig and dig and dig I almost always find the answer there," he says.

Soon after the hours were changed, Maxwell was at the forefront of a group called Books Not Bombs. For three days, he and his fellow-members, who included chemists, doctors, and professional philosophers, staged a decorous version of the old campus sit-in. "I did my normal research routine during the day. Then a member of the library staff would announce that the library was closed and go around and turn off the lights. Then someone would go behind this staff person and turn the lights back on, and we'd sit there. We were very quiet, very well behaved. There would always be speechmaking, then people would sit down."

Fourteen of the demonstrators were arrested, but Maxwell was one of only three to spend time in jail. The following July, President Reagan signed a supplemental appropriations bill authorizing the necessary funds to keep the general reading rooms going at the pace Maxwell and his friends had been used to. Last week, however, library officials announced an amended version of their old proposal. The general reading rooms will close at 5 P.M. on Tuesdays and Fridays, and will be closed every Sunday in the summer. "It is not as drastic as before," one of the officials said. "We're hoping the readers will be happy."

Maxwell remembers the first time he walked under the great rotunda of the main reading room. "I was in awe. Here was this vast room, ringed with mahogany desks with little lamps on top. I looked up at the rotunda, which is two-thirds of a football field high, and is gilded. It was profoundly beautiful." He has praise for the institution itself, and for the staff. "It's the most eclectic and egalitarian place in Washington," he says. "Anyone, from a homeless person to a post-Ph.D. scholar, will be treated there in a civil way." And he says that the library is not only the core of his life in Washington but the core of "the free and thinking world."

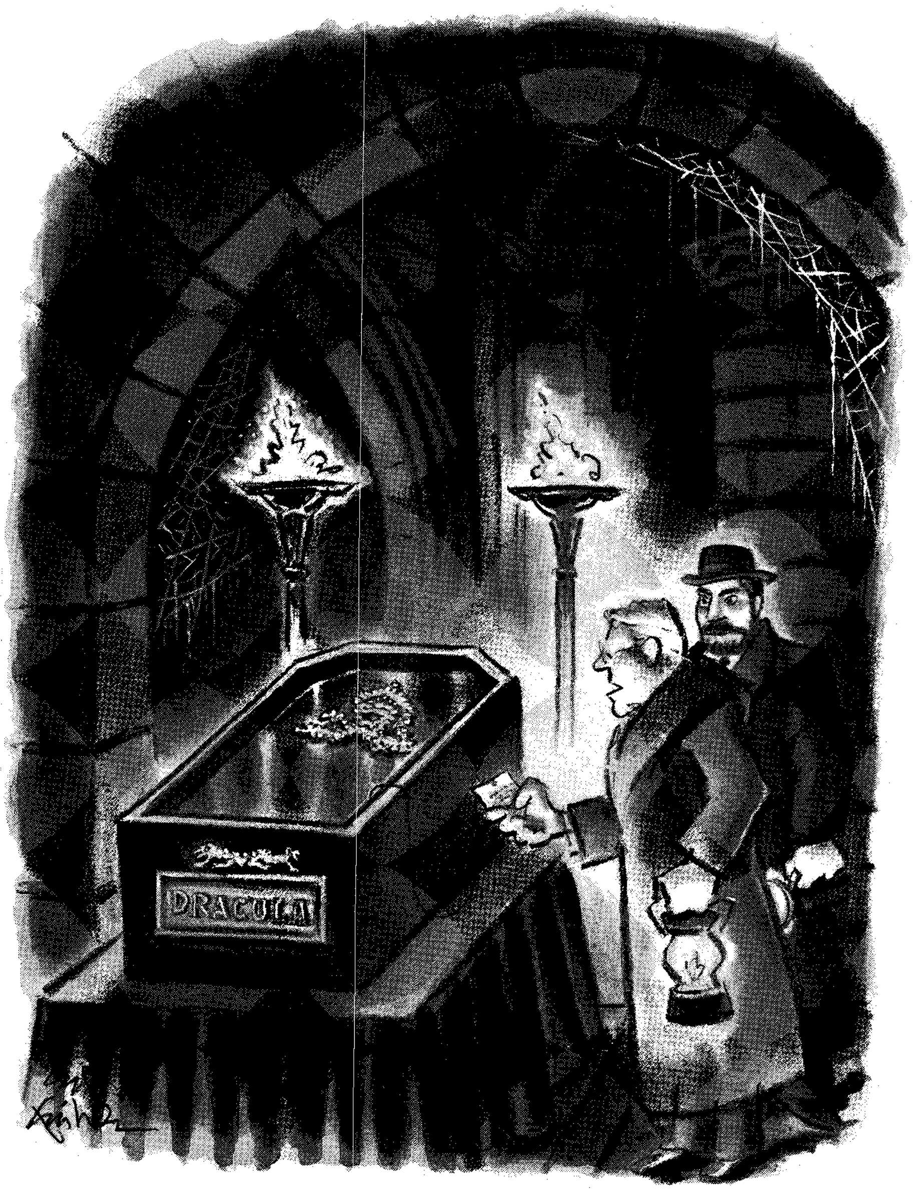
Maxwell has, of course, heard about the librarians' new proposal, and, of course, he is none too pleased by it. Last year, stack passes were rescinded, because too many of the books were being stolen or roughed up. If things continue this way, Maxwell says, he will take action. He rules out measures that might land him in jail, but says his principles are still intact. "If push comes to shove," he says, with a beady look, "there will be civil disobedience."

ROCKIN' ROLLINS

NEXT year's mayoral contest is looking interesting now that the prospective combatants are lining up their seconds. Once again, Rudolph Giuliani, the swashbuckling former United States Attorney and quadrennial Republican hopeful, is providing the best entertainment. In his 1989 duel with David Dinkins, Giuliani's pistols were in the care of Roger Ailes, the volcanic (and mountainous) political adman who had just supervised George Bush's evisceration of Michael Dukakis.

Now Giuliani is talking with Ed Rollins, the former political director of the Reagan White House. Rollins augmented his fame last summer when, in rapid succession, he was hired by Ross Perot, was fired by Ross Perot, and denounced Ross Perot. "I don't think six weeks out of a long political career makes a lifetime," Rollins said over the phone the other day. "I had a strategy and a campaign plan that I think would have put Ross Perot in the White House in this political year. I'm very grateful he didn't take my advice and my counsel, because I don't think he's suited to the office."

Giuliani met with Rollins the week before Thanksgiving, and is said to have been impressed. Rollins has never handled a campaign for local office in these parts, however, and it may be that ultimately Giuliani will opt for a guide who is better acquainted with the terrain. An advantage that might counteract



"This is a surprise—he doesn't want any extraordinary measures taken to resuscitate him."

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Rollins' unfamiliarity with New York City politics is that he could signal to potential donors that Giuliani is thinking big. In any event, Rollins, who may just be playing it cool, exhibits no sense of urgency about getting involved, claiming that he now restricts his forays into the political arena to the representation of friends—a category that Giuliani happens to fall into—if they request his assistance. Should he take the account, Rollins says, he would present his client as a "change agent." It's a phrase that is extremely popular in political circles, even though it calls to mind those old-time bus conductors who wore coin dispensers on their belts.

ALL IN THE MIND

In the middle of October, as election fever approached its peak, two Harvard Law School professors—Alan M. Dershowitz, a Clinton supporter, and Charles Fried, a supporter of Bush—contributed a joint article to the Los Angeles *Times* urging people not to vote for Ross Perot on November 3rd. To do so, they claimed, would be to endanger the traditional American two-party system, and this would be a very bad thing. Therefore, everybody should vote for Clinton or Bush, whether one liked either of them or not. The final sentence of the article, attempting to sum up the argument with appropriate *gravitas*, was (it developed later) composed by Professor Fried, a former solicitor general, in the Reagan Administration. "Remember," it went, "a voter discharges his or her duty as a participant in a democratic republic not by making a vindictive gesture or hoping to effect some far-fetched strategy, but by voting as if the outcome depended on his or her vote alone."

This view, which is perfectly respectable, if it is neither very original nor as self-evidently true as its author seems to believe, soon got a second airing, in another major news publication—*Time.* It was in a column by Michael Kramer in the issue dated November 2nd, the day before the election. Mr. Kramer, *Time's* chief political correspondent, also urged voters not to vote for Mr. Perot, and he ended his column as follows: "Remember that in a democratic republic, a citizen discharges his duty not by making a vindictive gesture but by voting as if the outcome depended entirely on his vote alone. It's just that simple."

It's also simple to copy out the ending of somebody else's article, edit it a bit, and attach it to the end of one's own article. But that is not what Mr. Kramer did. In a letter to Professor Fried, responding to a request that *Time* publicly acknowledge the plagiarism, he admitted to a "rip-off" and also pronounced himself "devastated" and "profoundly embarrassed" by it—because, he said, the offense was unintentional. "Your felicitous phrase clearly stuck in my mind," he wrote. "I should have realized when I 'wrote' it that it was too well put to have sprung from me unassisted."

This is not, of course, an incident of any importance, and *Time*, albeit rather belatedly, has pacified Professor Fried by promising to publish an apology in this week's issue. But it is another example of a perplexing recurrent phenomenon in which one person's words get unconsciously lodged in another person's brain, only to be spewed out later in almost identical form. Since this inevitably causes much distress and embarrassment, one has to believe that the plagiarism is usually involuntary, as its perpetrators always claim. But why it happens remains a mystery. Try memorizing Professor Fried's "felicitous phrase," and you will see how hard it is. ♦

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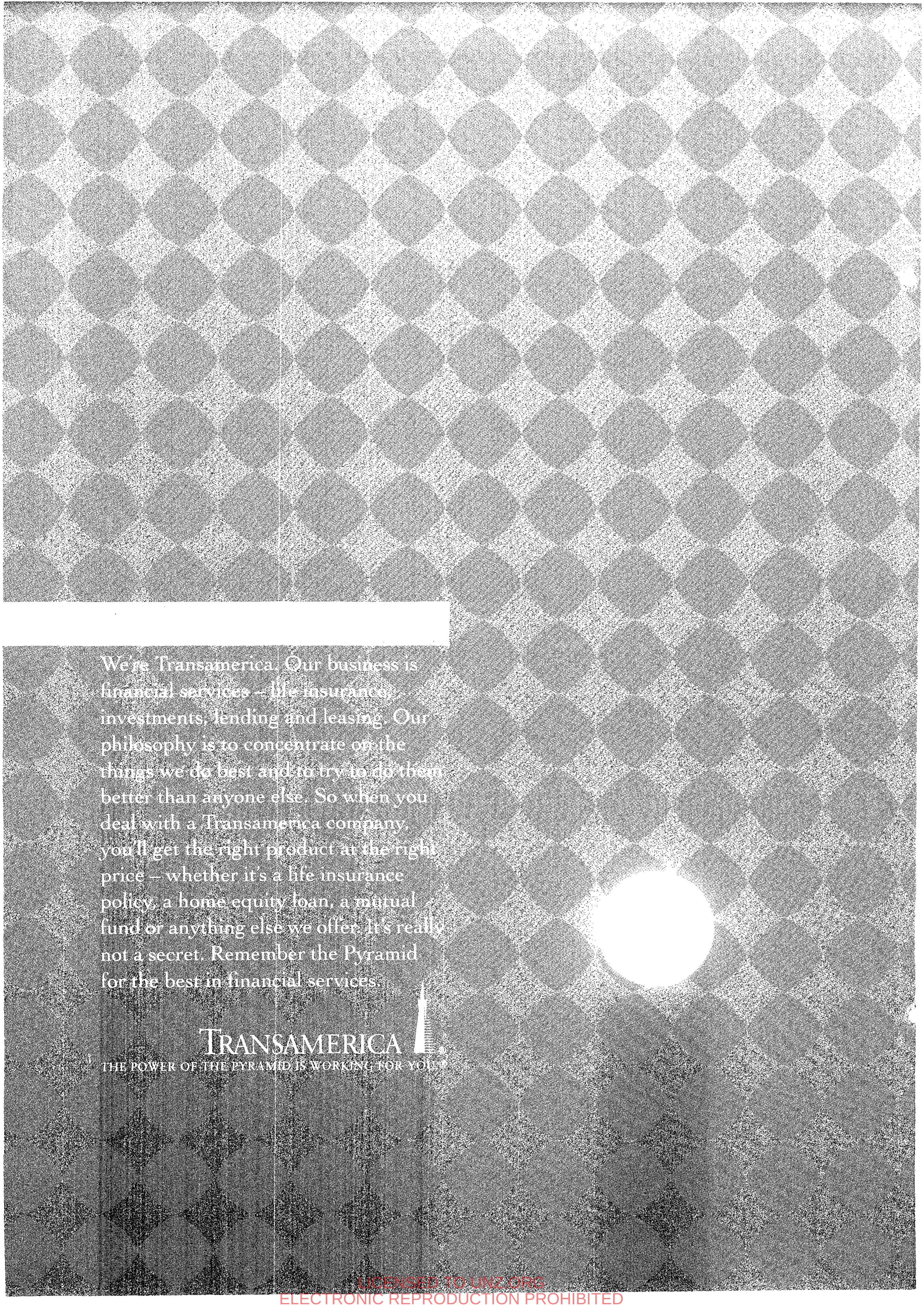

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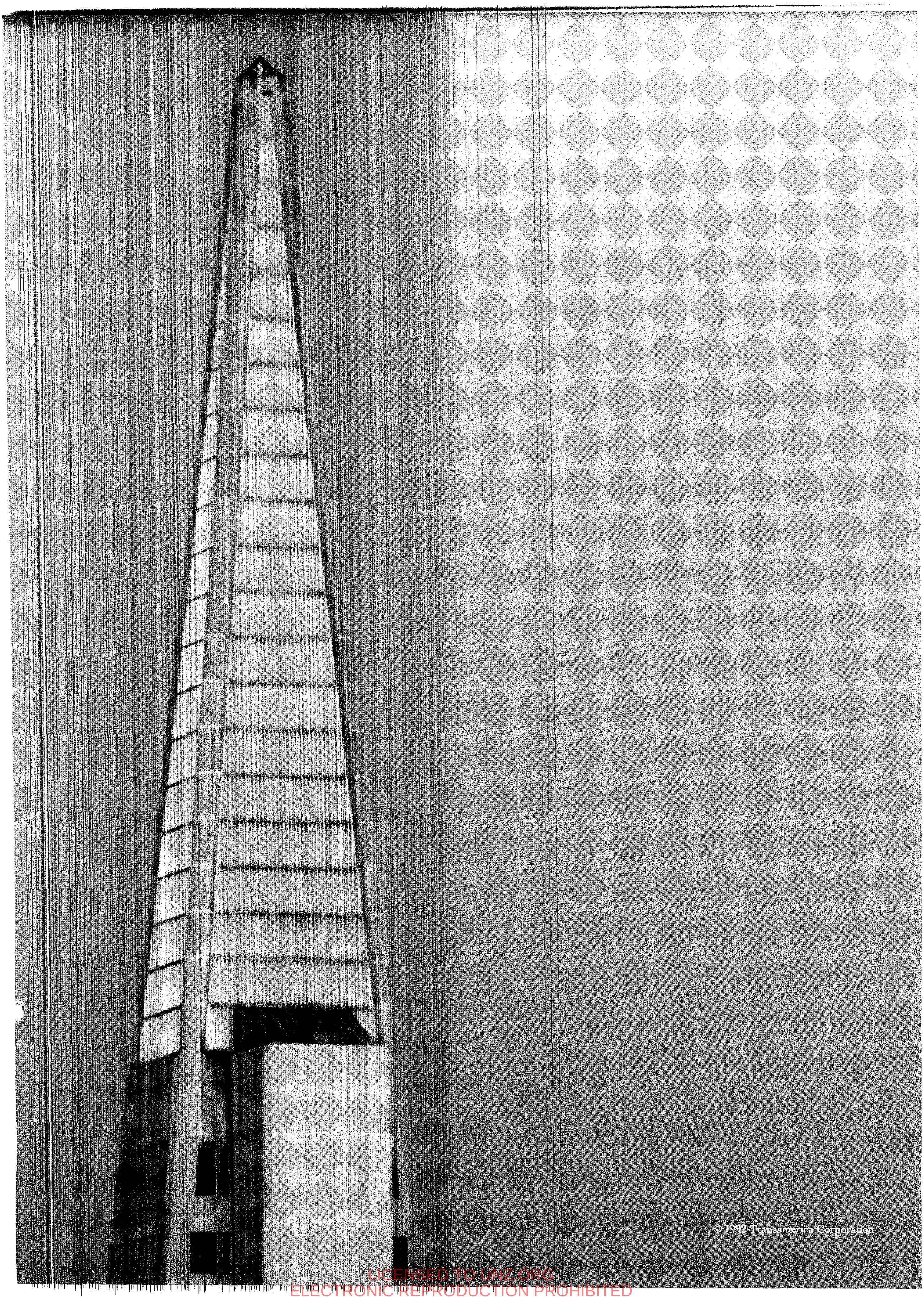

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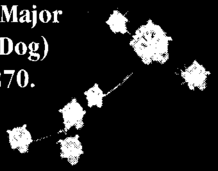

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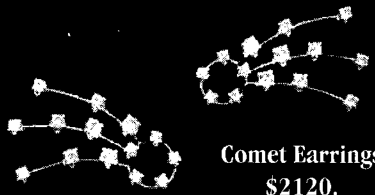

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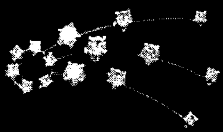

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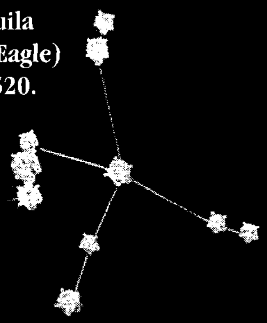

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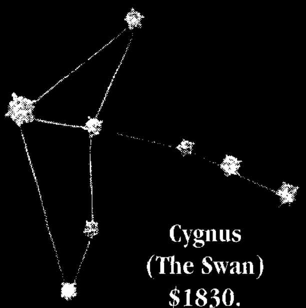

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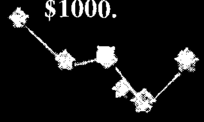

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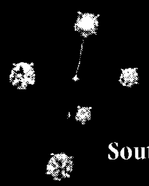

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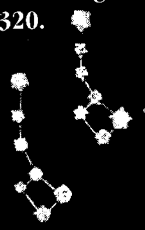

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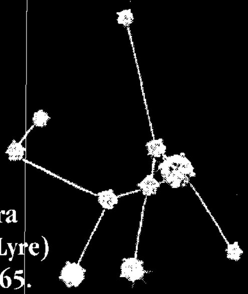

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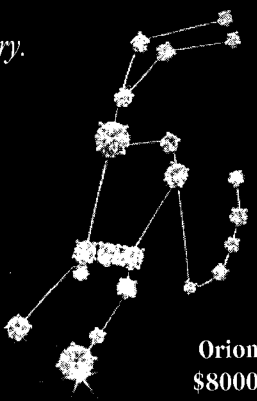

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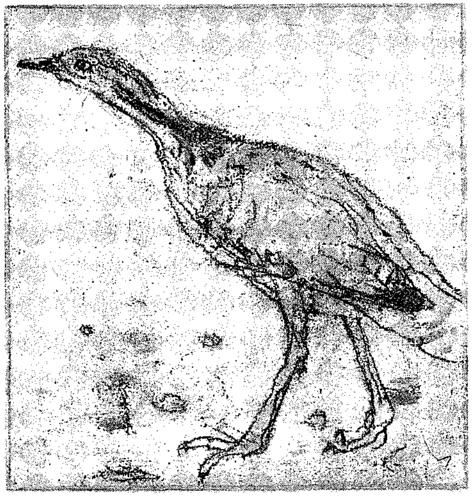
OUR FAR-FLUNG CORRESPONDENTS

HUNTING WITH THE SHEIKHS

by Mary Anne Weaver

ABRAR MIRZA, the conservator of wildlife for the Province of Sind, in Pakistan, is by nature a rather doleful man, and he always appears to be in a state of crisis. When I first met him, late last November, he was especially anxious, because he had been waiting for weeks—waiting for the full moon, and waiting for the rains, and waiting for the houbara bustard, an endangered species of a fast-flying and cursorial desert bird that migrates to Pakistan each autumn from the former Soviet Union and from the Central Asian steppes. A good many Arab sheikhs and princes were also waiting—discreetly—in opulent Karachi palaces.



The houbara bustard was declared an endangered species in 1975, but in the deserts of Pakistan each year Arab royals kill at least six thousand of the birds, whose meat has alleged invigorating powers.

DEBORAH ROSS

Mirza dreads November, he has often said, because his entire life is put on hold. The responsibilities of his position include the delicate job of monitoring the Arab royal hunts. He is a bit puzzled by them, and can't really explain why, with the arrival of the houbara, scores of Middle Eastern potentates—Presidents, ambassadors, ministers, generals, governors—descend upon Pakistan in fleets of private planes. They come armed with computers and radar, hundreds of servants and other staff, customized weapons, and priceless falcons, which are used to hunt the bird. Mirza considers it all a little excessive. But then the houbara bustard has been a fascination to the great sheikhs of the desert for hundreds of years. Poets have written about it. Old men of the desert have sung of it in tiny tea stalls. Even today, Arab diplomats, in well-appointed embassies abroad, discuss the advent of the season, and discuss it endlessly.

“The bird is a month late!” Mirza announced one morning when I stopped by his office, in Karachi, and found him at his desk, which was covered with mounds of papers and with half-finished cups of tea. He would make a fine Inspector Clouseau: middle-aged, wiry, although with a bit of a paunch. “Only a handful have arrived. And I am being held responsible, as though it's all my fault. Look at these telegrams!” He threw a mass of papers into the air. They were urgent messages from the Pakistani government—the majority of them from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which was most distressed.

It is the Foreign Ministry that awards the visiting Arab dignitaries special permits to hunt. Pakistanis themselves have been prohibited from killing the houbara since 1972. Yet each season, which lasts from November until March, their countryside is carved up, like a giant salami, into ever smaller parts. Some sheikhs—among them Zayed al-Nahayan, the President of the United Arab Emirates and the chief shareholder of the Bank of Credit & Commerce International, or B.C.C.I.—receive permits that cover thousands of square miles. No other hunters may cross the invisible line that separates Sheikh Zayed's personal hunting grounds from those of, for example, the Saudi Princes Naif and Sultan, or the Dubai leader, Sheikh Maktoum. At least, that is so in principle.

“Look at this!” Mirza nearly shouted, flailing a piece of paper before my eyes.

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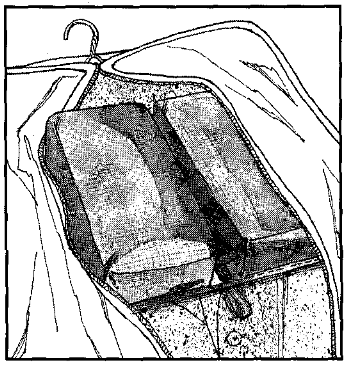

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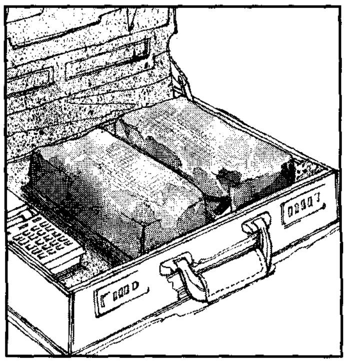

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Across the top was stamped "CONFIDENTIAL MOST IMMEDIATE"; it was a message from Colonel S. K. Tressler, the chief of protocol. Sheikh Maktoum would soon be arriving from Dubai, and a party of royal Bahrainis was hunting on his turf—not even Dubaians but *Bahrainis*. Mirza was instructed to sort the muddle out. Then, there was a party of hunters from the royal family of Qatar "sneaking around," Mirza said, on Saudi Arabia's turf. And a member of the Dubai royal family was reported to have bagged two hundred birds in a protected national park, in the company of the honorary game warden, who was a member of the Pakistani parliament.

"None of this would have happened if it hadn't been for Abedi," Mirza said. He meant Aga Hasan Abedi, the Pakistani who had founded B.C.C.I. "He was the one who first arranged hunting outings in Pakistan for the sheikhs. He set up everything for them—from doing their shopping to providing bribes and geisha girls. The more he provided, the more their deposits filled his bank."

I HAD my first inkling of the royal houbara hunts during a visit to Pakistan a few years ago when, late one evening, I entered the elevator of my Karachi hotel and, to my astonishment, found myself in the company of two Arabs with falcons on their arms. After a bit of research, I sought out a friend of a friend from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a man I will call Ahmed, and he agreed to let me accompany him to the Karachi airport on a night when he was to receive an advance party of one of the sheikhs. He made me promise not to reveal that I was a journalist.

The sheikhs are obsessive about their privacy. Some have built personal airfields to protect themselves from public view. Some have constructed huge desert palaces, surrounded by fortress-like walls. Some live in elaborate tent cities, guarded by legions of Bedouin troops. They have their own communications equipment, road networks, security forces, and police. Totally closed off to outsiders, their hunting fiefdoms are, in effect, Arab principalities. They sprinkle the vast deserts of Balochistan, Punjab, and Sind, covering hundreds of miles. The sheikhs move in and out of them like phantoms, giving rise to any number of outlandish stories, many of which turn out to be true. There is, for example, the story that the late King Khalid of Saudi Arabia transported dancing camels in a C-130 to join him on his hunt. There is the story that Prince Sultan, who is the Saudi Defense Minister, slaughtered seventy sheep and lambs every day to feed his royal entourage.

It was well past midnight when Ahmed and I reached the airport. (The sheikhs of the desert have always preferred to travel in the middle of the night.) A Pakistani Army major met us in the V.I.P. lounge, where a small group of Arab diplomats, in tailored silk suits, sat in a corner, sipping cups of sugary tea. They shook hands with Ahmed and nodded politely to me. Then black stretch limousines whisked us to a remote section of the airfield, which had been cordoned off by Pakistani troops to assure the sheikh's entourage of total privacy.

As we waited on the tarmac, the arriving planes lit up the night sky. Flying in formation—observing protocol, apparently—an executive Learjet was followed by two customized Boeings and a fleet of reconfigured C-130s, which flew two abreast. They had all been designated "special V.V.I.P. flights" by the Pakistani government. There would be no customs clearance, no passport control—the royal entourage enjoyed extraterritorial status in Pakistan. The lead planes touched down, and a red carpet was hastily unrolled. We all hurried to it, and stood in a slightly dishevelled line.

"This is the sixth flight this week," one of the Arab diplomats told me, exhaustion in his voice.

"Do you accompany them on the hunts?" I asked.

"Good heavens, no," he said, smoothing one of his silk lapels. "I'm basically a fisherman myself."

Two military officers in dress uniform got off the executive jet and walked briskly toward us, carrying attaché cases and swagger sticks. They were followed by other members of the sheikh's personal staff—a purser, a physician, a royal chamberlain—all in kaffiyehs and flowing camel-colored robes. Security men in khaki uniforms hurried from one of the Boeings and fanned out across the field. The doors of the C-130s opened, and immense vehicles began rolling down the ramps.

From a distance, the vehicles were merely dots of color—canary yellow,

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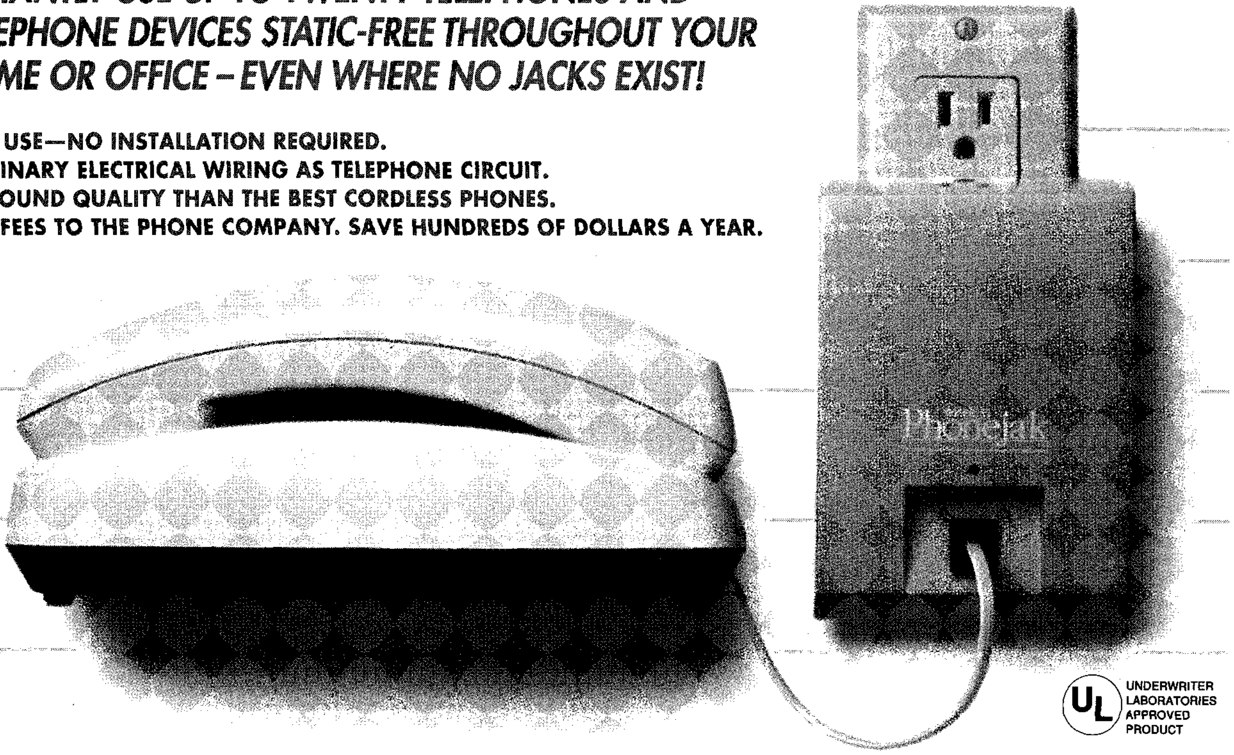

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bright red, black and white. Then they lumbered by us: two-thousand-gallon water tankers and eight-thousand-litre fuel tankers—dozens and dozens of them—in militarily precise lines. Now planes were landing all around us, ramps were quickly dropped, and jeeps, Range Rovers, and Land Cruisers raced down. They had all been customized for the royal houbara hunts, to make areas once inaccessible easily accessible now. They had open backs and convertible tops, and were equipped with special gauges, special shock absorbers, and special tires. Their drivers were dressed in Bedouin robes, and wore exceedingly dark glasses, even though the night itself was exceedingly dark.

There was a din, deafening at times, as camp managers shouted instructions in Arabic, as gears ground and brakes slammed, as more and more heavy equipment was disgorged. Security men dashed back and forth. Cranes labored across the runway and carefully unloaded satellite dishes and communications equipment. From time to time, I glimpsed generators, air-conditioners, mobile bars, VCRs. "They're totally self-sufficient in the desert," the diplomat who preferred fishing said. "Some of them even drill their own water holes. Providing water for an entourage of three hundred people is a problem." He shook his head.

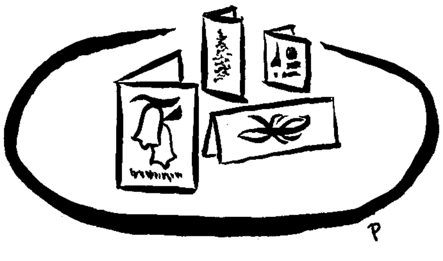
During all the commotion on the runway, I had become separated from Ahmed, and now I went in search of him. I found him among a group of agitated officials, standing in a tight circle beneath a wing of one of the planes. "The mobile palaces are new," he told me, "and they don't know how to get it down." Looking up, I saw an unwieldy dark-blue structure, about fifty feet long and perhaps thirty feet wide, stuck at the top of the ramp. It was a customized Mercedes, and prominent on its hood was a now slightly askew gold-plated royal crest. "When they first began coming," Ahmed said, "even King Khalid and Sheikh Zayed slept in a tent."

In 1929, H. R. P. Dickson, a British colonial officer who had served in Kuwait, described the houbara's yearly arrival on the Arabian Peninsula as "a season for rejoicing." He wrote, "The rains are close at hand and . . . the hubara have arrived. They are verily, like the manna of old, Allah's reward to those who have endured the summer heat."

By the nineteen-sixties, the houbara had been hunted almost to extinction in the Middle East. "There was near hysteria when the bird disappeared," an Arab ambassador told me. The kings, sheikhs, and princes hurriedly dispatched scouting parties abroad. They recruited British and French scientists to attempt to breed the houbara in captivity. They called upon Japanese technicians to develop special tracking devices and customized vehicles for the hunt. It was the beginning of what would become a multimillion-dollar industry. But none of their endeavors solved their most pressing problem: Where could they hunt the houbara bustard *now*?

Pakistan was believed to have one of the largest migratory populations of houbara in the world, but no one was quite certain, then or later, how large it actually was. For although the houbara was declared an endangered species in 1975, largely as a result of the high-tech hunting of the sheikhs, no international conservation group had ever done a comprehensive study on the bird's distribution worldwide. After a good deal of debate, experts at an international symposium in Peshawar, Pakistan, in 1983 finally agreed that Pakistan's houbara population probably numbered somewhere between twenty and twenty-five thousand birds. In retrospect, the figure seems extremely low. The houbara reproduces at a rate that increases its numbers by only about five per cent a year, and the conservation officials I spoke with on this trip told me that the Arab hunting parties were bagging at least six thousand birds a year, and even that figure was considered a very conservative government estimate. (Sheikh Zayed alone brings a hundred and fifty falcons with him.)

Although General Muhammad Zia ul-Haq, Pakistan's President in 1983, supported the symposium, he ignored its unanimous appeal that houbara hunting be banned in Pakistan altogether for at least five years. For while the number of Arab royal falconers was small—perhaps two or three dozen men—they were all immensely powerful, and immensely rich, and they put millions of dollars into their hunts. They also provided Pakistan—whose per-capita G.N.P. was only three hundred and fifty dollars a year—with some three and a half billion dollars annually in military and economic aid and in remittances to two million Pakistanis working in the Gulf. So, despite appeals from Prince Philip, who is the president of the World Wildlife Fund, and from other conservation groups, the sheikhs and princes continue to hunt.



One evening in early December, I was invited to a dinner for one of the visiting sheikhs. It was held at the elegant Karachi home of the Talpurs, one of the great feudal families of Sind. They were the ruling family of the district of Mirpur Khas and controlled vast tracts of land, where members of the royal families of Dubai and Qatar had begun to hunt, including Sheikh Muhammad, a Dubaian prince for whom the dinner was being held. None of the guests seemed certain of precisely who he was, although they all assured me that he was definitely a very influential sheikh.

A billowing *chamiana* tent of red, white, blue, and yellow had been set up in the middle of the Talpurs' lawn. It was filled with imitation-Louis XV wing chairs and upholstered settees arranged in a large rectangle. Bearers in starched white jackets served whiskey and gin in tall glasses that had been wrapped delicately in paper napkins. (Alcohol is forbidden in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.) As everyone waited for the Sheikh to arrive, I greeted a number of Pakistani ministers and former ministers. It was an impressive gathering of Karachi's feudal, political, and financial élite, for, if the Arab sheikhs and princes were attaching greater urgency to the houbara hunt this year, so, in a sense, was the government of Pakistan. It had vacillated during the Gulf War, agonizing over what it could do that would be acceptable at home and yet would not displease its Arab patrons or the United States. In the end, ten thousand troops were sent to the Gulf, with orders not to fight. Officially, they were sent to Saudi Arabia to guard its religious shrines. But

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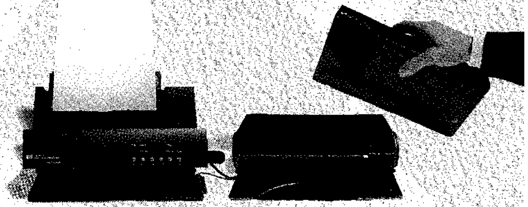

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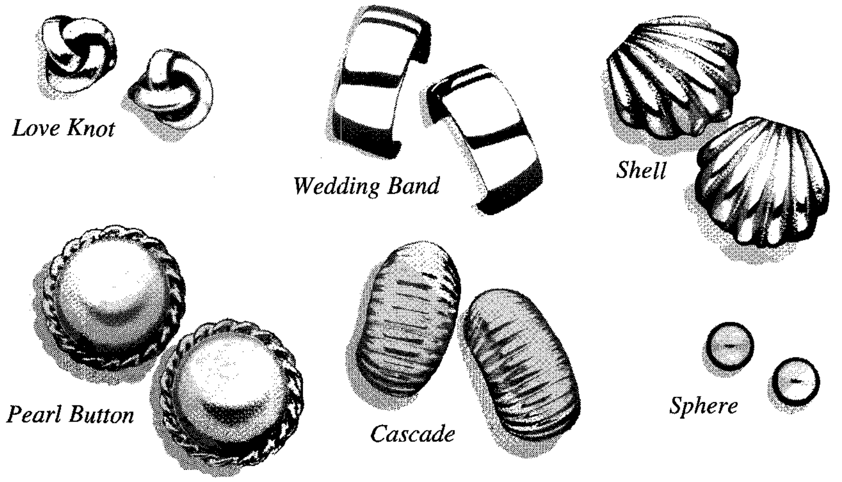

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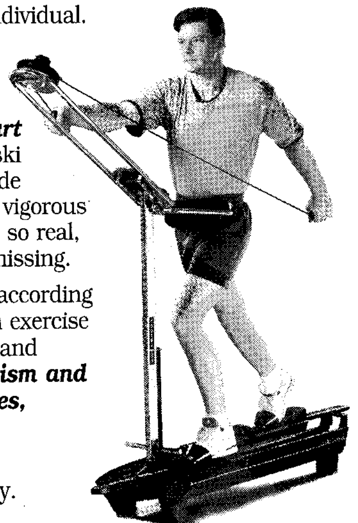

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no sooner had the troops been dispatched than Pakistan's zealous mullahs—whom Saudi Arabia had been funding for years—announced, with some flourish, that they had recruited thirty thousand volunteers to fight on the side of Iraq. Nobody knew for certain where Pakistan stood, and no government was more irritated than the government of Saudi Arabia. The houbara bustard was now a pawn on the geopolitical chessboard.

"We must find a proper seat for you," my host, Nawab Abdul Ghani Talpur, said to me. "You must not be so close to the Sheikh as to be conspicuous, but you must not be so far away that he can't see you and invite you to join him on his settee." It was finally decided that I should sit between a feudal landlord and a member of parliament. The landlord was a short, plump man with betel-stained teeth who was wearing a reddish-orange toupee. He said that the sheikhs had been hunting on his private lands for nearly a decade. We all hurried to sit in our assigned places as the Sheikh's arrival was heralded by screeching sirens and by guards scurrying to take up positions along the perimeter of the tent, their Kalashnikovs at the ready.

"His Majesty," the Nawab announced, and we all jumped to our feet.

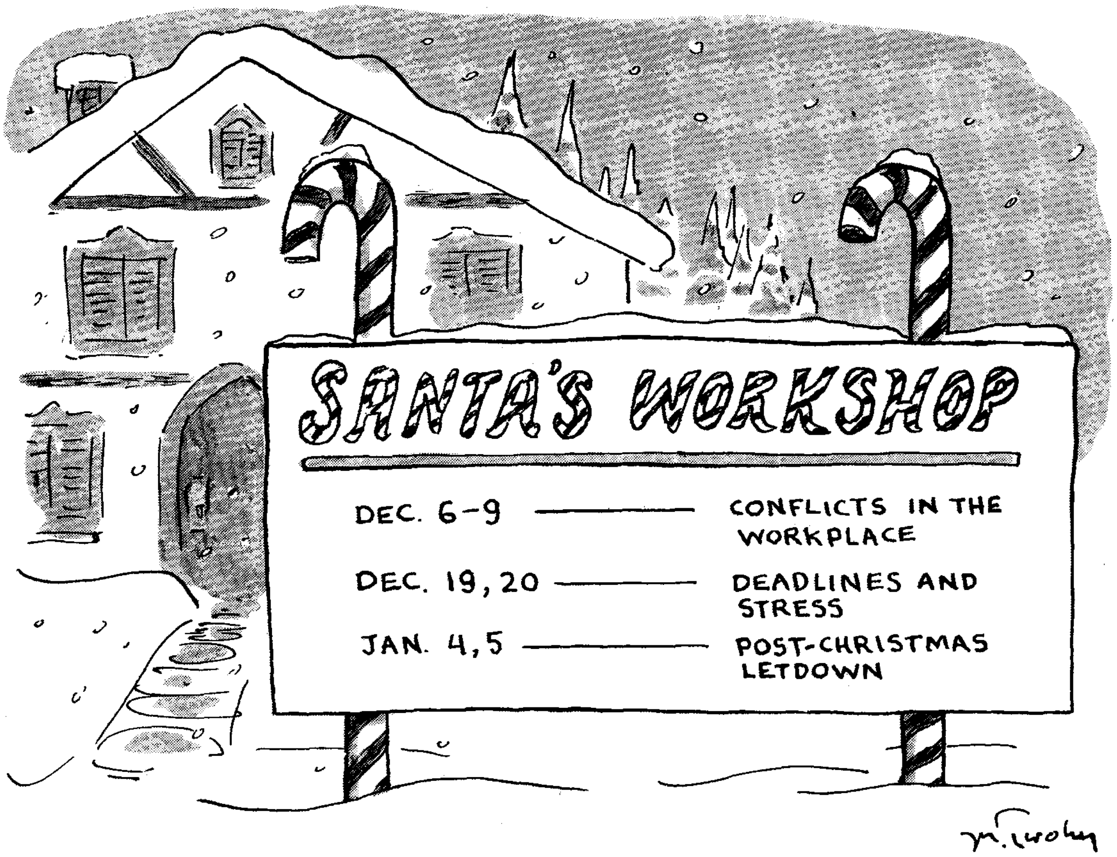
"He's not 'His Majesty,'" the landlord whispered dismissively. "He's merely the brother-in-law and the cousin of the ruler of Dubai, and he's not a very good hunter, either. When he didn't find any houbara in my desert tracts, he moved his entire camp—servants, vehicles, falcons—into Kirthar National Park. He killed more than two hundred houbara in ten days, and he killed gazelles and ibex, too."

"Why was that permitted?" I asked.

"No one has ever written, either Jesus or the Prophet Muhammad, that Pakistan must be poor."

That was the way many of my conversations in Pakistan went. I met game wardens wearing jewelled watches that were gifts from the sheikhs. Politicians, chief ministers, and former chief ministers received lavish residences or customized cars. Some of them shopped frequently in London—flying back and forth in one or another of the sheikhs' private planes.

Sheikh Muhammad bin-Khalifa al-Maktoum swept into the tent. His face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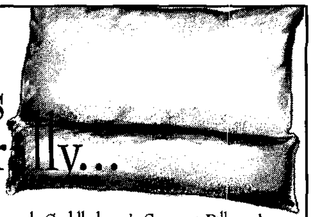

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showed no emotion as he went from guest to guest. A slight man with a Vandyke beard, he was dressed in a black robe trimmed with gold, and a white kaffiyeh. For some reason, he carried a shepherd's wooden crook in his hand.

After I introduced myself, he asked me if I lived in Pakistan.

"No, Your Excellency. I've come for the houbara hunt."

"We're not hunting," he said, rather tartly. "We're only training falcons." And he moved on.

I asked the landlord how much a typical royal hunt cost.

"Well, when you take everything into account— The hunting vehicles, minus their electronic fittings, cost at least twenty thousand dollars each; then add the costs of their falcons and private planes; and, of course, there are the out-of-pocket expenses." He laughed a guttural laugh. "The controller of Sheikh Muhammad's household told me that he paid about two hundred thousand dollars out of pocket for this particular trip. He's spent a total of about nine million dollars thus far, and he bagged about six hundred birds. That works out to about fifteen thousand dollars a bird."

He then quickly added that that figure was low. The sheikhs normally spent between ten and twenty million dollars for a typical royal hunt.

I glanced at Sheikh Muhammad, now sitting on a gilded sofa at the head of the tent. He sat rigid, seemingly bored, with the shepherd's crook held upright in his hand. The etiquette of the evening was that one was not permitted to leave one's seat unless summoned by the Sheikh. We sat for over two hours, and only three of the sixty-odd guests were invited to the royal settee.

"Have you ever been with a sheikh on a bustard hunt?" the landlord asked me as the evening dragged on. "It's the craziest thing I've ever seen, but it's like a religion to them. They're out in the desert from dawn to dusk, covered with dirt and dust. The driver is submerged in one of those jeeps, as if he were in an A.P.C."—armored personnel carrier. "The sheikh sits next to him in an elevated seat that swivels at a hundred and eighty degrees. I guess it's a good hobby, if you're into that kind of thing."

"What kind of thing?" I asked him.

He looked somewhat startled, then said, "My lady, these Arabs eat the houbara for sexual purposes—it's full of vitamins."

A FALCON trainer told me that if I really wanted to see a hunt I should go to Balochistan, to Chagai district. It was a Saudi hunting area—a place called Yak Much. Bordering Afghanistan and Iran, Chagai is on one of two migratory paths by which the houbara enters the country, and is thus one of the most preferred hunting areas in Pakistan.

A sixteen-hour car ride, through desert and mountains and tribal lands, brought me to Quetta, the provincial capital of Balochistan—the only province in the country where the houbara is known to breed. And, in increasing numbers each year, eggs, chicks, and birds are being smuggled out, primarily to Taif, Saudi Arabia, where French scientists—in a multimillion-dollar effort of limited success—are currently attempting to breed the houbara in captivity. In the fall of 1991, Mirza had confiscated five such consignments—some five hundred birds in all—in just six weeks.

Shortly after my arrival in Quetta, I called on the provincial wildlife minister, Jam Ali Akbar. He told me that he really wasn't much of a wildlife person himself. He wrote pop music, and was the president of Balochistan's Roger Moore Fan Club. I asked him if the provincial government was doing anything to protect the houbara.

"It's impossible—it's a federal-government matter," he said. "And these sheikhs are extremely attached to this little bird. It's not a simple matter." He shook his head. "The wildlife people say this shouldn't be permitted. But then the sheikhs' agents come, bringing priceless gifts, like diamond-studded gold Rolex watches. And sometimes, I've heard, they dispense briefcases containing a couple of thousand dollars—and you can keep the briefcase, too. The sheikhs say that these are migratory birds, so we lose nothing. And if we don't permit it they'll simply go somewhere else."

Quite by accident, I met Balochistan's largest falcon dealer, Mir Baz Khetran, one afternoon in my hotel. His presence there shouldn't have surprised me. Royal hunters had begun arriving, en route to their hunting grounds, and falcons had become a familiar sight throughout the hotel. Mir Baz and his brother, Lal Muhammad, dealt in falcons together, which was largely illegal in Pakistan, and Lal Muhammad also served as one of the chief minister's key advisers—on wildlife.

It was Lal Muhammad who trapped the falcons, Mir Baz explained when we chatted in my room at the hotel; their servants trained them, and then he himself sold them to the sheikhs. His falcon empire had insured him a seat in Parliament, and he had been a Cabinet minister in Benazir Bhutto's short-lived government. Mir Baz was in his early forties, and had a round, puffy face and dark hair. He wore sparkling rings and a good deal of cologne; gold chains covered his chest, which was half exposed.

"Such hectic times," he said, slumping in his chair. "The falcon season lasts for only four months." (The most expensive falcons migrate with the houbara from Siberia.) "But fortunes, Madam!—fortunes can be made. There is a huge competition between these Arab sheikhs. And if a sheikh sees a falcon that he judges to be *hurr*," or noble and free, "and if that bird is nearly white or totally black—both are extremely rare—that sheikh, Madam, nearly has a heart attack. He simply must buy it, and he will pay *such* money for beauty."

"How much?" I asked.

"Nothing less than the equivalent of eight thousand dollars. The record price for Balochistan this year was twenty-five lakhs"—a hundred and twenty thousand dollars—"for a shahin, which was caught in the northern border area, near Zhob. By the time it reaches the Middle East, it will bring much more."

Mir Baz then said, "You know, Madam, these Arabs consider the houbara an aphrodisiac."

"So I've heard," I replied.

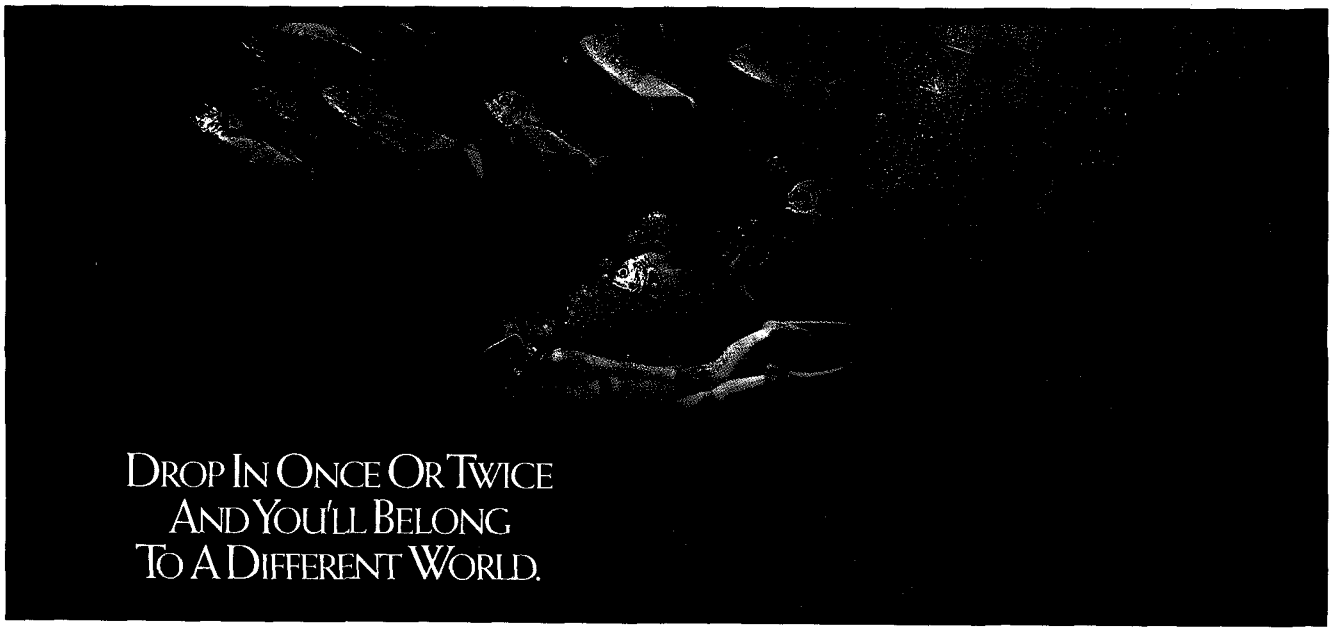
"But some of them, Madam, eat one houbara a day—sometimes two, if it's a special occasion. That means they may eat as many as *five hundred* birds a year!"

SEVERAL nights later, I was invited to dinner by one of Balochistan's tribal chiefs—Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti, the leader of the second largest of the province's seventeen major tribes. An aristocratic Anglophile who had spent the last forty-five years in and out of government, in and out of favor, and in and out of jail, Bugti was now the leader of the opposition in the Provincial Assembly and one of Balochistan's most powerful men.

When I arrived at his home, I found his receiving room crowded with other tribal chiefs. Sardars, mirs, and maliks sat cross-legged on a Bukhara rug and lounged against pillows piled against a wall. The Nawab greeted me warmly; I had known him for some time. He then went from guest to guest, and each reported on the site of one or another of thirty or so royal parties hunting in his tribal lands.

"Where is Yak Much?" I asked the Nawab, after he had spoken to his guests.

"In the middle of God's country," he replied. "It's miles and miles from nowhere—nothing but tons and tons of sand. And it's totally off limits to everyone except the Saudis. Ask *them*." He pointed out two men on the other side of the room, and then introduced me to Ali Ahmed Notezai and Sakhi Dost Jan. They were the kingmakers of Chagai



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district, of which Yak Much was a part.

Notezai was a member of the Provincial Assembly, and was allegedly involved in the smuggling trade. He reminded me of a penguin with stubble on its face. Sakhi Dost was a rather more distinctive type: a large man, he had a broad, menacing face, and his teeth were betel-stained. He wore a brown waistcoat over his *shalwar kameez*—the Pakistani national dress—and a white turban, cockaded and lofty, that tied from behind, so its folds of soiled cloth streamed down his back. His wealth, which was considerable, was also said to be grounded in the smuggling trade, and he had the reputation of being a bit of a Robin Hood. When I asked him about that, he said there was no point in robbing the poor.

Both men had known the Saudi Defense Minister, Prince Sultan, for years—ever since he began hunting in Chagai district, where he held exclusive sway over nearly twenty thousand square miles. They told me that the Saudi hunters would be led by one of the Prince's sons: Prince Bandar, the Ambassador in Washington, or Prince Khalid, who had commanded Saudi forces during the Gulf War, or Prince Fahd, the governor of Tabouk Province. But it would definitely be a son. "In this wild mavericking, they don't trust even their brothers," Notezai explained.

"What *is* so fascinating about the houbara?" I asked.

"The sheikhs tell me it is the ultimate challenge for the falcon," the Nawab replied. "Much of the fascination is in the flight; it can go on for miles. The falcon is the fastest bird on earth, and the houbara is also fast, both on the ground and in the air. It is also a clever, wary bird, with a number of tricks. Part of the lure is in *finding* it. You can spend half a day following its tracks. It's a contest—your wits against its. Then, there's the contest between the two birds. The houbara tries to stay on the ground, where it is difficult, sometimes impossible, for the falcon to strike. The falcon tries to coerce it, cajole it, frighten it into the air. There the falcon reaches for the sun, and then comes down on the houbara—but it must stay above. Otherwise, the houbara, whether as part of its defensive armor or in its reaction to fear, emits a dark-green slime violently from its vent. Its force is so strong that it can spread for three feet, and it can temporarily blind the falcon, or glue its feathers together, making it unable to fly. The sheikhs have told me that, once that happens, many falcons will never hunt the houbara again."

The Nawab called for a servant and gave him instructions in Balochi. The servant left the room, and he returned carrying a custom-built leather case. He placed it at my feet.

"Open it," the Nawab said.

I did. Nestled inside, protected by a fur lining, was a 24k.-gold-plated Kalashnikov. It was a gift to the Nawab from the Minister of Defense of the United Arab Emirates, who hunted in Balochistan each year. It was the size of a normal Kalashnikov but was perhaps three pounds heavier, because of the gold. It was engraved with the royal coat of arms, and its two magazines were also plated in 24k. gold. The Nawab handed it to me. I had held a Kalashnikov before, but I had never held three pounds of gold.

"In the old days, we would hunt the houbara on foot or camelback," the Nawab said. "We would try to outsmart it, using the camel as a shield. The houbara knows the camel, since the camel grazes in the areas where the houbara feeds. You couldn't go directly for the bird, or it would flee. So you circled it on camelback, making the circle ever smaller. The houbara would watch, mesmerized, confused. But now customized vehicles have replaced camels, palaces have replaced tents. They use radar, computers, infrared spotlights to find the bird at night. What is the challenge? What is the thrill? The odds have changed immensely for the houbara. The poor bird doesn't stand a chance anymore."

YAK MUCH ("One Date Palm") is a desert village of about a hundred people, one gas station, and a few little food stands and shops. And, on close inspection, I found that it now has five date palms. Its most distinctive feature is a large green board at the village line, which in bold lettering announces "No Hunting Permitted." Since the houbara breeds here, Yak Much is, in principle, a protected sanctuary.

A mile or so beyond the sign was the Saudi royal camp. My driver was the first to spot it. There was nothing around us except desolate miles of sand, but then, stretched along the horizon, we saw lines and lines of tents. If we hadn't been looking for them, we could easily have passed by. The camp was deep in the desert, five miles off the road, and as we continued along the highway we could see the tents one moment, and the next moment they would disappear.

We left the highway at an unmarked point—there was no road—and careered across the desert, lurching around bushes and shrubs. Then the camp came into focus—scores and scores of black, brown, and white pyramidal forms. Against the flat emptiness of the desert, the tents suggested a gathering of giant dinosaurs. The camp sprawled over some ten acres, in two concentric circles, bringing a medieval city to mind. The inner tent city, of forty-four *chamianas*, was surrounded by perhaps sixty smaller tents. They stood like a wall, as if to keep all outsiders out. The perimeter was guarded by Pakistani levies and border militiamen, dressed in blue or gray sweaters and berets. Some were swathed in blankets against the desert chill. The inner city was guarded by security men in the retinue of Prince Fahd, who would lead the Saudi royal hunt.

Vehicles were lined up in neat patterns on the perimeter of the camp: water tankers, oil tankers, petrol tankers, and a fleet of customized hunting jeeps. There were immense yellow cranes, to pull the vehicles out of the sand if the need should arise; a mobile workshop, which was fitted with everything necessary to overhaul a car; and huge refrigerator trucks, to carry the hunting bag out. Silver satellite dishes were anchored in the desert rock. From inside the camp, you could make a phone call to any place in the world. I spotted two royal falcon trainers whom I had met at my Quetta hotel. They carried mobile telephones, and their falcons were perched upright on their arms.

There were now about a hundred falcons inside the camp for the seventy or eighty royal hunters who would accompany Prince Fahd. Only the Prince's favorite falcons would arrive with him. I asked the chief of the Pakistani security detachment how long it had taken to assemble the camp, and he said only four days. The hunting vehicles—there were sixty—and the heavy equipment, tents, generators, and fuel had all been transported from Jidda by C-130s to the airport in Dalbandin, which was the closest town to Yak Much, thirty-five miles away.

Officials in Dalbandin had told me that the Saudi royal parties—which usually hunted two to three thousand birds during their monthlong stay—had no beneficial impact on the local economy: they'd given residents only two generators (which didn't work), a mosque (which they didn't need), and the airport (which was used almost exclusively by the hunters themselves).

At the camp the following evening, after Prince Fahd himself had arrived, I sat in a Land Cruiser next to the dining tent, whose vast brown folds, with intricate gold stitching, billowed in the wind. The tent was surrounded by some twenty-five security men, who stood at smart attention with their Kalashnikovs.

I sat in darkness, my head covered with the hood of my cape. It was bitterly cold. The wind was ferocious. Land Cruisers and Range Rovers began to arrive. As I waited for Prince Fahd's personal physician, whom I'd met earlier in the day, I watched Dalbandin's notables saunter toward the dining tent, where they had been invited to dine with the Prince. The visiting wildlife minister, Jam Ali Akbar, was flanked by servants and guards carrying two carpets, which were gifts for Prince Fahd. Ali Ahmed Notezai strutted like a peacock as he entered the tent. Sakhi Dost Jan, wearing his brown waistcoat and flowing white turban, shouted instructions here and there. Earlier that day, I had spoken to both men about the possibility of my meeting Prince Fahd.

"Impossible," Notezai said. "The Prince doesn't want to meet any women this time."

"I'm not a woman. I'm a journalist."

He shrugged. "It's all the same," he said.

The Prince's personal servants ferried bottles of mineral water and huge trays of food between the tents: roast lamb with dates and rice; hot nan bread; hummus; tahini; baskets of fruit. I watched two trainers open a large wicker basket near my jeep and pull out two baby houbara with clipped wings, to be used for training falcons. Carrying the little birds in their left hands, they walked off, each with a falcon perched on his right wrist.

I left the jeep and stood in darkness near the entrance of the dining tent. Inside, Prince Fahd, dressed in a camel-colored woollen robe embroidered with gold thread, sat cross-legged on an Oriental carpet, receiving his guests. The floor of the *chamiana* was covered with exquisite Kashan and Persian antique carpets and rugs; bolster pillows, in silk cases sewn with gold thread, lined the walls. In a far corner, there was a network of cellular phones, and other communications equipment hooked to a satellite dish. Behind the Prince, like a ceremonial guard, thirty-five hooded falcons stood at attention. They perched on specially designed, hand-carved *mashrabiyya* stools, etched with ivory and gold. The falcons were of three different kinds—different in color, age, and size. Despite their magnificence, however, all were dwarfed by a peregrine that stood at the Prince's side, on the arm of his chief falcon trainer. She had travelled with Prince Fahd on the royal flight, and during the entire evening she never left his side.

Sakhi Dost Jan was the last of the V.V.I.P. guests to depart. He stood outside the dining tent, flanked by bodyguards and aides. He gesticulated, then shouted. A Saudi intelligence officer flailed his arms. Other Saudis came up and encircled the two men.

"What is happening?" I asked one of the guards.

"Rupees, Madam," he said. "Lakhs of rupees." He rolled his eyes.

After some ten minutes of negotiations, an aide of Prince Fahd's appeared, and presented Dalbandin's godfather with two bulging leather saddlebags. Sakhi Dost smiled his toothy smile. He then got into his Range Rover and roared away.

One of the guards brought me a plate of food and a cup of tea. I looked down at the dark meat, which was surrounded by rice. "Is this the houbara?" I asked.

"Yes," he replied.

I hesitated momentarily, and then took a few bites. The meat was tough and stringy—it reminded me a bit of goat—and left a bitter aftertaste. Far from arousing amatory impulses, it had an irritating tendency to stick in my teeth. How could anyone eat five hun-

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dred of these birds a year? As I pondered the mysterious ways of the desert, Prince Fahd's physician came over to chat.

"Is it true that the houbara is an aphrodisiac?" I asked.

He looked amused, and shrugged his shoulders. "No," he replied. "It's basically a diuretic. But they *think* it's an aphrodisiac."

THE howling of dogs and the chanting of mullahs woke me at dawn. No sooner had I started a fire in my tiny fireplace, in Dalbandin's government guesthouse, than one of the royal trainers whom I'd met in Quetta the previous week—I'll call him Farouq—pounded on my door. "We're taking the falcons out!" he said. I was to accompany him back to the Saudi camp.

We left the highway before we reached the main turnoff to the camp, and drove into the desert for perhaps a mile, to a spot where another trainer and a driver waited in a customized, carpeted Range Rover. Both men carried hooded falcons—one a shahin and one a saker—on their gauntleted right arms.

I was instructed to sit in the back seat of the open jeep, with the other trainer and the hooded saker, which seemed dangerously close to my left knee. Farouq—with the hooded shahin now perched on his black-gloved wrist—took the revolving bucket seat in the front. He adjusted it to its maximum height, and towered some three feet above us, in midair.

The sun was just beginning to rise, and the sky was violet-pink. All around us, the flat emptiness of the desert stretched endlessly. The silence was broken only by the wind and the grinding of the Rover's gears. From time to time, we passed black slate formations that resembled giant marshmallows burned in a bonfire.

The trainer next to me, whom I'll call Mahmud, wore sandals and bright Argyle socks. "Her name is Ashgar," he said of the hooded saker on his arm. "And she's just a year old. That is the perfect age for this particular bird."

Ashgar was extremely light in color, almost blond, and measured perhaps thirty inches from her head to the tip of her tail. White spots on the tips of her feathers, which resembled polka dots, blended quite smartly with the red leather hood and jesses she wore.

"Her talons are like steel if she grabs you. That's why we wear gloves," Mahmud said, stroking Ashgar and giving me a pleasant smile. He then told me that Ashgar was from Iran, and had been a particularly sought-after bird, not just for her color but for her "soul."

I studied the falcon more closely. A tiny solar cell, covered by glass, was attached to her tail feathers, and a thin metal aerial affixed to it rose from her feathers up the bottom of her back. It was a French-made radio transmitter, a tracking and homing device slightly larger than a watch cell; it had an especially sensitive receiver that had been devised purely for the houbara hunts. Mahmud said that the transmitter weighed about five grams and had a radius of some eight miles. It gave off a constant beep once the bird was on the wing. "If she is lost during the hunt, we can retrieve her by the next day, maximum," he said. "Even when she parks for the night, we get a constant signal in our jeeps."

"Can the transmitter be used to track a houbara?" I asked.

"Only indirectly," he replied. "If the falcon catches a houbara, the beeper tells us where they are. But, basically, we track the houbara by radar or two-way radio."

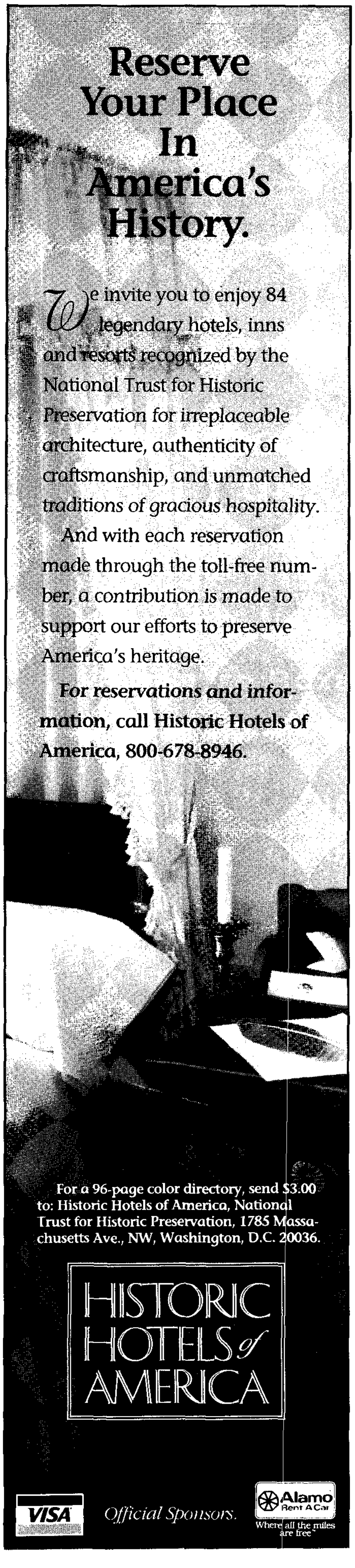
The wind became fierce as we raced across the desert at eighty miles per hour, searching for houbara tracks, and knocking down everything in our path: shrubs, bushes, even tiny trees. I glanced ahead at the driver, who was wearing goggles and a crash helmet and was bent over the wheel intently. I suspected that at one time or another he had driven a tank.

A friend had told me earlier that the Yak Much desert was more like the Middle East than anywhere else in Pakistan was; you could travel for days without seeing another human being. We had travelled for more than forty miles, and although I'd seen no human beings, I had certainly seen their traces: plastic bags, abandoned jerricans, and discarded tires. There were some areas where the hunting vehicles had so flattened everything in sight that a plane could have landed with ease.

Then Farouq shouted, "There are the tracks!"

They were unmistakably those of the houbara—three-toed footprints dotting the sand.

Farouq stroked the shahin's underbreast, whistled softly in her ear, then raised his gauntleted arm above his head.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"A-hoh, a-hoh, a-hoh," he chanted, above the noise of the wind, as he removed the shahin's jesses and hood with a single quick movement of his free hand. "Strike! Strike! Strike!" The shahin cast her piercing eyes incessantly around, bobbed her head, and then lurched forward, leaving Farouq's arm. She soared into the air, her radio transmitter and aerial visible in the feathers of her tail. She flew low—barely off the ground—to conceal herself, and was often out of our sight as we raced across the desert, following her path. We were guided by her radio beeps.

"It should be four or five minutes," Mahmud said, and he explained that the shahin had extraordinary vision: she could sight for over a mile. But we raced along for twenty minutes before we spotted the shahin and a houbara, on the ground. At first, they were tiny, indistinct forms in a mustard field. Then, as we surged ahead, I lost sight of the houbara.

"There she is!" Farouq shouted.

"Where?"

Even with high-powered binoculars, I couldn't find the houbara, and it was perhaps only ten yards away, concealed and camouflaged—its contours and buff-and-sandy-gray coloring blended perfectly with the desert and the bushes and shrubs. When I finally did spot it, it was frozen behind an absurdly small bush, and uttered no sound. It was a baby, weighing perhaps two pounds. The shahin circled overhead, then swooped down, attempting to frighten the houbara off the ground. The houbara tried to enlarge itself by spreading its wings, and watched our every movement with unblinking yellow eyes. Then, in an instant, it had taken off. It darted across the desert like a roadrunner; its long legs seemed not even to touch the ground. Its tail was spread like a peacock's, and its chest was thrust out.

We raced, dashing, lurching, and jolting, in huge zigzag circles, following the two birds. Then both took to the air—an absolutely cloudless blue sky. You could distinguish the houbara by its white undersurface and wings. The shahin soared and dipped, her vast wingspan spread majestically. The houbara eluded her, and tried to gain altitude. From time to time, the birds almost disappeared, becoming tiny, inky webs, but they were never completely out of sight—

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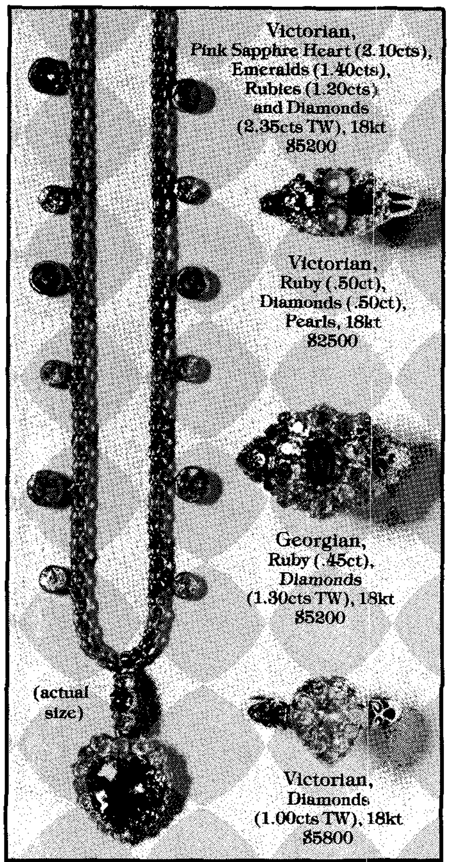

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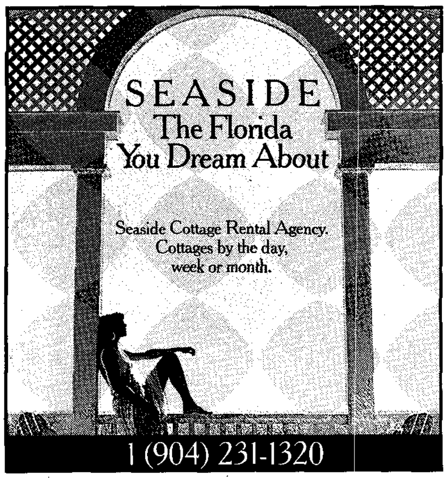

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we had our high-powered binoculars in addition to our radio beeps. This hunt was a far cry from the romantic image of the lone Arab walking across the desert in his flowing robe with his pet falcon perched nobly on his arm.

The shahin soared for the sun, and came down on the houbara, attempting to break its neck. The houbara flew on furiously, and the shahin struck again. The two birds spiralled downward. We found them near a tamarisk bush, struggling on the ground. The baby houbara lay exhausted but was still trying to kick. The first thing that the shahin had done was blind its yellow eyes, so that it could not run or fly away. Farouq cut open the houbara's stomach, retrieved its liver, and fed it to the shahin. He then hooded the falcon and ritually slit the baby houbara's throat, to conform with dietary laws.

"Now it's *halal*," he said—permitted in Islam.

THERE was a time, Wahajuddin Ahmed Kermani, Pakistan's retired Inspector General of Forests, told me, when the houbara had been so plentiful in Pakistan that you could count them from the roadways "like butterflies in a field." But that was in the nineteen-sixties, before the great sheikhs and falconers began hunting in Pakistan.

I called on Kermani, one of his country's most respected environmentalists, at his Karachi bungalow. If any Pakistani had attempted to save the houbara, he was that man. As we sat in his drawing room one morning, sipping cups of tea, he described his efforts to save it as "the only failure of my life." He went on to say, "For a quarter of a century, the hunting has been intensive and sustained. They go through the desert like an invading army. It's slaughter, mass slaughter. They kill everything in sight."

When I asked him why the government of Pakistan had done so little to deal with the situation, he replied, "Because we lack the moral fibre and the moral courage."

Kermani applauds the efforts of Tanveer Arif, the president of the Society for Conservation and Protection of the Environment, or SCOPE, a Karachi-based group that challenged the houbara hunts' legality in the Sind High Court. "The hunts are sheer hypocrisy, and totally contrary to our laws," Arif told me one afternoon. "Since 1912, in the days of the Raj, the houbara has been a protected species. Yet, while Pakistanis are being arrested and prosecuted if they're found to be hunting the bird, Arab dignitaries are given diplomatic immunity." Although in September the Sind High Court ruled in SCOPE's favor, its decision has had little impact on the Pakistani government.

Like Kermani, Arif is deeply upset that international pressure to ban the royal hunts is not being brought to bear on the government of Pakistan. Twenty-three countries, including India, Iran, and the former Soviet Union, have legislation that protects the houbara, or bustards generally, and in the vast majority of these countries there is a ban on all hunting.

After making my trip to Pakistan, I asked Paul Goriup, the leading houbara expert at the International Council for Bird Preservation, in Cambridge, England, whether he thought the international community was doing enough.

"International efforts are exceedingly scant," he replied. "The houbara is merely a distraction, not a priority. There's no doubt that in the Pakistani provinces of Sind and Punjab the population, which was once sizable, is now terribly diminished. Balochistan is thus the only area left that is worth hunting in—and the problem there could be severe. There's a breeding population, and if the sheikhs hunt after February"—they always do—"then it's a disaster, for they impinge on the breeding population for the next year.

"It's a stalemate in Pakistan," Goriup went on. "The Pakistanis see the Arabs breaking Pakistan's own laws, yet huge sums of money are involved. As for the Arabs, they realize that the houbara is declining outrageously, yet they continue to hunt. Still, they're worried, and I'm absolutely convinced that they would accept regulations if the regulations were there." He thought a moment, and then said, "I've maintained consistently that the houbara should be protected by the United Nations' Bonn Convention on Migratory Species, because such protection would elevate the problem to an international level. We could set up protected areas. Money would flow the right way. We must restore habitats and breeding grounds. This is the only way the houbara can be saved." ♦

GIFTS FOR THE HOUSE

BABY, IT'S COLD OUTSIDE

LARA HARWOOD

SINCE the tidings worldwide aren't all that full of comfort and joy, perhaps this is the Christmas to concentrate on gifts that are cozy or lift the spirits, or both, and we'll start with bed pillows—bed pillows filled with goose down, not fibrefill. An informal poll, with a .0001 margin of error, confirms our belief that almost no one actually *buys* bed pillows. They are something you just have, starting when you go off to school or set out to seek your fortune and take a couple of pillows from the Aged P.s, who may well have got them from *their* P.s. After that, bed pillows simply accumulate as needed. Proof of this is that they are always on sale. We are here to testify that there is nothing like a new goose-down pillow, and two are even better. Extensive punching and hugging at Bloomingdale's and Macy's have revealed that the price of a pillow increases in direct ratio to the quality and the amount of its down and the thread count of its cover. Most goose down comes from overseas, because a country's production of down depends on its eating habits, and North Americans consume relatively little duck and goose. Gray goose down and duck down are cheaper than pure-white goose down, and the presence of feathers lowers the price further, because feathers have spines. In pillow departments, there's a lot of talk about "superior fill power" and "exceptional loft" (and also about "mature, live-plucked goose down," which doesn't bear too much thinking about). A standard pillow filled with pure-white goose down, medium or soft density, and covered with a two-hundred-and-twenty-thread-count cotton cover, is $59.95 (on sale) at Bloomingdale's. Approximately the same thing at Macy's is $50. (The cover has a lower thread count.) "Overstuffed to incredible proportions" is not desirable—too firm. We were told in both stores that Firm is for people who lie on their sides; Medium is for those who lie on their backs and snore; Soft is for those who lie on their stomachs. For the triathlon sleeper, Medium is the way to go.

Those thrown into paralysis by too much choice should get themselves down to Ludlow Street between Houston and Stanton, where Bill Itzkowitz makes bespoke pillows at No. 174. Down wafts softly in the crepuscular light, making the shop resemble one of those snow paperweights. Mr. Itzkowitz doesn't put on airs, and in jig time he'll run up a European-white-goose-down pillow (twenty ounces) covered in two-hundred- or two-hundred-and-fifty-thread-count solid or striped ticking, for $50. As for fill power, he says, "If the mixture is good—plenty of down—it will rise nicely, and hold up better. The best down is goose—thirty-five per cent more loft than duck down." He always has a few pillows in stock, and will make a pillow of any size to order. A queen-size down comforter, containing four pounds of down, is $200; a baby pillow is $10. (Bloomingdale's and Macy's no longer carry baby pillows. "Not worth their while," Mr. Itzkowitz says.) His shop is a delight to come upon, even though customers may spend the rest of the day brushing off their clothes.

To dress up the pillows, telephone Muriel Clarke, the chatelaine of Trouvaille Française, which is an unfailing source of reasonably priced antique and vintage linens (212 737-6015). A pair of

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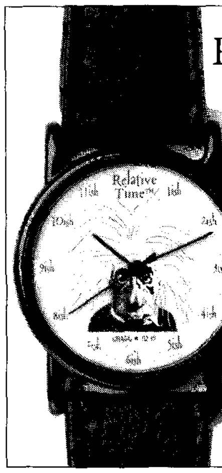

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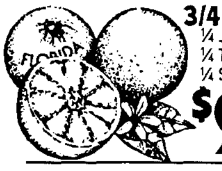

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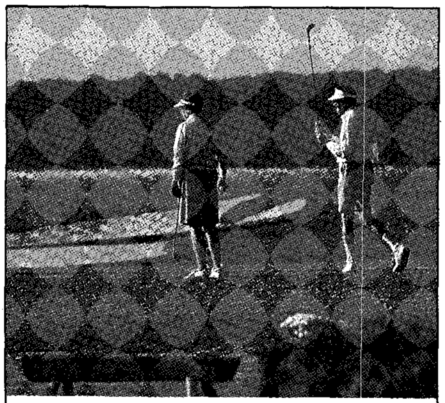

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percale cases with two inches of fine Victorian crochet along the edges is $35, and with openwork embroidery they're $75. Simple linen cases with hemstitching or cording are between $65 and $75 a pair. Square cases run from $60 a pair, for plain linen ones, to $225, for a pair of silky linen shams with lace and tucks. A glorious bolster cover, fifty-seven inches long, all butterflies and lace, is $170. (Mr. Itzkowitz will make a bolster to fit for $100.)

Inexpensive—relatively speaking—white shams for standard pillows have heretofore been unavailable in this country. Their virtue, aside from looks, is that they keep the pillow from creeping out the end. Portico Bed & Bath, 139 Spring Street (Wooster), carries shams to suit every purse, in cotton or linen—no synthetics, no Easy Care. Everything has to be ironed unless you're quick on the draw at the dryer door and a dab hand at smoothing and folding. Two-hundred-thread-count white cotton shams, made by Hillcrest, are $31 a pair; squares are $40 a pair.

A further note on software: Barneys has some throws of sybaritic double chenille that come in three soft colors: lavender, moss green, and sea foam; they're $300.

INDOOR HARDWARE: By far the jolliest glasses we've seen are to be found at Bergdorf Goodman. They are from Victoria and Richard MacKenzie-Childs, a couple who have been turning out ceramics in Aurora, New York, for nine years, and have now taken to designing blown glassware. The glasses are painted with a freewheeling, exuberant hand: flowers, dots (both polka and pin), stripes, and checks, but not all on the same piece. The rose goblets are particularly winsome; $70 each. A sherbet glass—stripes, checks, and polka dots—is $56; an octagonal Old-Fashioned glass with stripes and a marbleized ring around the base is $19, and a coördinated pitcher is $95. A new MacKenzie-Childs line of pottery, called the Torquay Collection, is "inspired by beach huts, stripes, palms, and flowers." It's square, heavy, and busy; a twelve-inch plate is $72; a bowl is $64. An entire set of these ceramics could bring on the whirlies, but one piece would cheer up the dreariest table. Bergdorf continues to collect vintage silver-plated nickelware made for English and French hotels and restaurants, and now the House of Commons: $265 for a one-cup coffeepot; $480 for a six-cup pot. (Question: Why is the House of Commons unloading its coffeepots?)

FRANK MCINTOSH has been travelling to foreign parts and buying up a storm for his shop, at Henri Bendel. Ceramic dishes made by South African tribeswomen—each piece signed, and full of joyful, fantastic animal imagery—don't look naïf or faux-naïf. A rectangular serving dish, with handles and with four fish perched along the edge, is $525; a salt-and-pepper set with giraffes on it is $95. A Russian tray, three feet long, with masses of hand-painted flowers in bright colors, looks Russian, Victorian, and brand-new, all at the same time; $475. Small glasses, in three different shapes, that come in wire frames made of a nonconducting metal, are for tea, espresso, or hot buttered rum (if people still drink hot buttered rum). They're Italian, and they're smart; $12 a glass. Sturdy straw placemats, from China, in stained-glass colors—red, blue, and green—on ivory, are $16 for four. "And then," Mr. McIntosh says, "for the Madonna crowd—you know, all those people who come in here with their hats on backward and wearing five thousand dollars' worth of leather—we have these wineglasses." The stems are wrapped in silver-colored wire, and there are two glass blobs and two wire coils embedded in the base. The look is Outré Sturdy; $14 for the champagne glass, $12 for the all-purpose wineglass.

Around the corner from Bendel, at 10 West 56th Street, is Felissimo, a sort of highly selective department store, occupying all four floors of a town house, with a tea shop on the fourth floor. It's the retail outlet of a Japanese mail-order company, whose aim is to be environmentally sound and financially viable. The designer Clodagh and her architect-partner Robert Pierpont have been let loose, and the horses have not been spared. (She is the Clodagh of Clodagh, Ross, Williams, the beyond-the-minute store on St. Marks Place, which unfortunately bit the dust a few years ago.) Each item of the décor has a name: Open Sapling (lighting fixture), Exploding Papyrus (shelving). The cheapest item is a free-form gray coaster ($1.50);

the most expensive is Clodagh's cast-bronze-and-cherrywood "walk-up" bookcase, which you can actually climb ($45,000). Anyone who is a klutz when it comes to wrapping might take a look at the *furoshiki*, which are squares of cloth that can be draped around anything of moderate size, such as a melon. There's even an instruction booklet. The cloths are rayon, the colors are offbeat, and the prices range from $6 to $17.50. (Larger ones are sold at Kate's Paperie, 8 West 13th Street.) Whether or not you buy anything, scope it out.

A number of stores may be in a state of "financial despondency," as an ad in the *Times* phrased it, but not Simon Pearce, who recently opened a two-story recession-be-damned, confidence-in-the-future emporium at 500 Park Avenue (entrance on 59th). (His original, more modest shop is still at 385 Bleecker Street.) Simon Pearce's glass and Philip and Stephen Pearce's pottery, along with the work of various other artisans not named Pearce, are given plenty of room here. Pearce has been working on glazes with Jeff Pentland up in Quechee, Vermont, and has produced a celadon crackle stoneware—the crackle was the hard part—that looks old. A large dinner plate is $24, and a majestic urn, called an "entry piece" (it's eighteen inches tall and eighteen inches across), is $150, and would look like a million with some dried grasses in it. Glass ice cubes make a lovely substitute for frogs in the bottom of a see-through vase; $3.

Across the Hudson River and into the trees—Snedens Landing, New York, to be precise—there lives a potter named Jane Herold. She was apprenticed for two years to the late, great English potter Michael Cardew, and established her own pottery here eight years ago. She makes wood-fired stoneware only—no lead, and everything is safe in the dishwasher, the microwave, and the oven. She makes pottery to mix in, cook in, serve in, eat from, store in, or sit on. The color choice breaks down to a semi-matte black, a greenish glaze, "natural blush," and blue-and-white painted (nice in the morning, she finds). All her work is easy to live with, she will make things to order, and she doesn't charge enough. A black dinner plate is $20; a beautiful soufflé dish, in rosy earth tones, is $36; a large salad bowl, deep enough so that the salad can be tossed with impunity, is $70. Potters' Gallery, 168 Thompson Street (Houston), carries some of her work, and one can either go to the gallery or phone Ms. Herold and make an appointment to visit her in Snedens Landing. (Telephone 914 359-5421.)

Outdoor Hardware: Across the East River, in Locust Valley, Long Island, is a studio in which Cecily Pennoyer and Mercedes Littlejohn make rubber molds from some very aristocratic old garden statuary and containers. The molds are then filled with three layers of bonded resin; the outer layer of resin has limestone, marble, bronze, or brick dust mixed in, and at ten paces you can't tell the replicas from the originals. The pots won't break from the cold or from root expansion, and they are lightweight, so plants that have to be taken indoors can be easily transported. Mrs. Pennoyer started the business five years ago, when she copied a lead turtle belonging to her mother-in-law, "because everyone in the family wanted one." She went on to copy everything she owned and everything her mother-in-law owned. (It should be stated that Pennoyer and Littlejohn have access to some very high-toned pots and ornaments.) The repertoire now includes gargoyles, animals, minstrels, urns, cisterns, plaques, flower boxes, fountains, and birdbaths, at prices running from $40 to $750. If you don't have a friend whose garden is up to some of these replicas, consider them for someone who has a terrace, either in the city or in the country. Or consider the Christmassy pots, such as the Petite Garland Pot (seven inches by nine), perhaps accompanied by a petite plant; $40 without the plant. Telephone for a brochure, or to make an appointment (516 676-1920).

Alessi, of the highly stylized teakettles and other domestic hardware, has come up with four lighthearted weather vanes, made of recycled aluminum and sold at Barneys: a golden bolt of lightning, by Tucker Viemeister ($165); a superannuated verdigris angel with specs, by that joker Stanley Tigerman ($185); a gray whale, by Takenobu Igarashi ($200); and a pennant painted a faded red, blue, and gold, by Michael Graves ($225).

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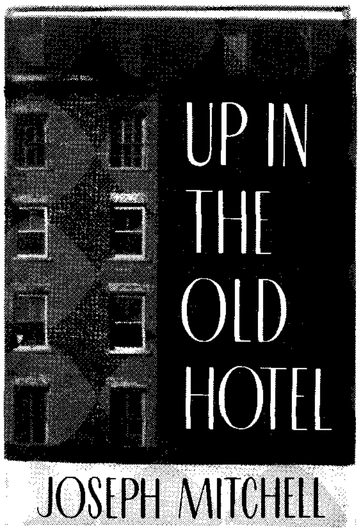

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All of the contents of this book originally appeared in *The New Yorker*.

down to Wolfman-Gold & Good, where a birdhouse real-estate boom is going on. There's a wide range of architectural styles—everything from a log cabin ($24) to the I.B.M. Building or the Empire State Building ($95). For larger gracious homes, prices rise to $225. A bird feeder disguised as a white Victorian house is $135. And there's a square clapboard house with a trellis and a rusty tin roof containing a sprinkler (the owner is to attach a hose) that theoretically makes it possible to house birds and water the agapanthus simultaneously; $145.

Zona, 97 Greene Street (Spring), sells stones—just ordinary stones, about size 6-EEE, with the name of an herb incised in lowercase on each: dill, tarragon, oregano, mint, and so on. They would look good in a free-form herb garden; $11.50 apiece.

The big-ticket items are the cinchy part of Christmas shopping—all that's needed is a lot of money. Finding gifts for the thirty-three other names on the list is what drives people to the prewrap counter. A store to bear in mind is William-Wayne, 324 East 9th Street, where the proprietors take the pocketbook issue seriously, and try to keep prices under $100. Well-fed five-inch cherubs, with antique gilding, and facing either left or right, are $15 apiece. Blackboards, with chalk and eraser, in the outline of either a large teapot or a small pig, are $25 or $12.50, respectively. (Bears have most-favored-animal status in the stores this year; pigs run a close second.) Picture frames made out of yardsticks might be just the thing for black-and-white photographs of your kids; $15 to $30. A vintage First World War oval basket, made of stripped willow on a solid wooden base, was supposedly used by the Swiss Guard for transporting rocket cannisters. It is not clear just what the Swiss Guard did with their rockets, but the carriers make excellent umbrella stands. They are fifteen inches long, and take up very little room; $47.50. A simple black wrought-iron candelabrum, with six curved arms, hangs by a slender rod and two linked hooks; $65. A silver-plated Art Deco quartz alarm clock, as handsome as any we've seen, is five inches square, and costs $75.

Cabbages & Kings, 813 Lexington Avenue (63rd), is another out-and-out gift shop with something for every pocketbook. Although the mind doesn't turn to thoughts of mint juleps at this season, the silver-plated mint-julep cups here have classic good looks, and could be used to hold flowers or pencils, and would do a lot for toothbrushes; $15 apiece, with or without beading. "Welcome," "Do Not Disturb," and "No Smoking" signs in needlepoint, with velvet backing and a silk cord, are also $15 each. A green wooden boot rack, from England, can hold four or five pairs of boots. It has a painted cutout of a Welly on each end, and, although it could undoubtedly be knocked together by a seventh grader in crafts class, seventh graders tend to be more interested in making plaques; $95.

A strictly seasonal present, to be found at Keesal & Mathews, 1244 Madison Avenue (89th), is a glass Christmas-candy dish, with hand-painted candy canes and striped mints between two layers of glass, so they don't wear off. It's nine inches across and goes for $38.50. (A larger size, which is unnecessary, is $75.) A pair of terra-cotta cherub candlesticks for all seasons, beaming at each other, are eight inches high and cost $35.

Some Small Things: Keesal & Mathews sells a pâté knife with a ceramic candy-cane handle for $5.95, which should definitely be accompanied by a can of pâté. Kate's Paperie has a small box labelled "Small Things" and illustrated with the miscellany that is usually found in such boxes: key, paper clip, thimble, tack, screw, needle, postage stamp, push pin, puzzle piece, penny, button, pencil sharpener. It could be pre-filled, and costs $12.50. Terra Verde Trading Co., 72 Spring Street (Lafayette), is concentrating on small things that can be either assembled in a round kraft box ($3) or stuffed into a stocking. Although none of the items are likely to race anyone's motor, there is a certain glow that comes from doing the ecologically correct thing. A foot scrubber made of clay taken from the banks of the River Indus and shaped like a hot-water bottle is $8.75; a round tin of edible hand balm for cooks (the recipe of a gourmet Indian cook and anthropologist named Niloufer King) is $10.50; a simultaneously red, blue, and yellow pencil, from Germany, is $2; notepaper made of recycled maps from the United States Geological Survey is lined on the blank side, like children's writing paper, and, folded, becomes its own envelope; nine sheets are $1.50. Terra Verde also carries the present we would most like not to receive: a wood-and-metal pencil extender, an attachment that enables you to get the most out of your stub. It's $3.50. Pure Mädderlake, 478 Broadway (Broome), has found a woman who makes miniature pottery vases in different shapes and colors. The tallest stands an inch and a half, and they are sweet; $5.50 each. Terra Cotta, 259 West 4th Street (Perry), sells Fire Starters, which look like squashed candles, have no odor, and work without benefit of kindling; $2. A silver yo-yo is $75 at Tiffany, and salespeople let you try it out. Check first to be sure the string isn't twisted; staff members occasionally Walk the Dog or Shoot the Moon when business is slow.

Eve Olitsky

THE CHRISTMAS TABLE

The first thing we would like for this year's Christmas table is a tablecloth from Black Hound, 149 First Avenue (9th). Renowned for its admirable cookies, cakes, nuts, and chocolate truffles, Black Hound now sells a few select accessories for the table. Silk squares, with two-and-a-half-inch contrasting borders, are weighted at each corner with a tassel attached by a button. The tablecloths are machine-washable, the colors are what are often referred to as "melting"—oatmeal with a pink, yellow, blue, and green border (one color to each side)—and there's also a cloth in tiny, unmelting black-and-white checks with a white border. They are expensive, but they could double as a shawl for either a piano or a person. From $175, for a cloth forty-eight inches square, to $400, for one ninety inches square. Then, there are some berry plates—four

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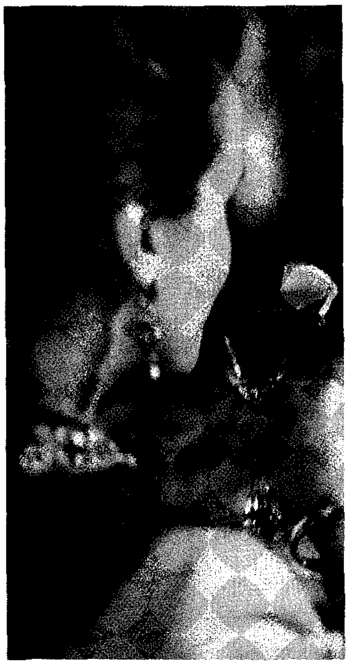

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THE HOLIDA

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DOUGLAS KEEVE

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1 1/2 OZ. LEMON JUICE
1/2 OZ. TRIPLE SEC
1 OZ. TONIC WATER
FLOWER FOR GARNISH

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OR GINGER ALE
SPLASH OF CLUB SODA
LEMON WEDGE FOR GARNISH

POUR BACARDI BLACK AND SWEET VERMOUTH INTO A TALL GLASS OVER ICE; FILL WITH LEMON-LIME SODA OR GINGER ALE. ADD A SPLASH OF CLUB SODA AND A WEDGE OF LEMON.

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dessert plates with pale-green stencilled leaves and, in the centers, severally, one gooseberry, one cherry, two raspberries, and nine black currants. They are packed in a woven split-palm box, and would look good on one of those tablecloths, or anywhere else, for that matter; $27.50. As for the comestibles here, there isn't a dog in the lot. A chocolate basket filled with almond cake, raspberry jam, vanilla custard, raspberry sauce, and whipped cream, and topped with fresh raspberries, strawberries, and blackberries, would astonish the bourgeoisie at any holiday gathering; $42 for one that feeds from ten to twelve, and $6 for one the size of a teacup. The chocolate pepper cookie at Black Hound is a surprise cookie for grownups. At first swallow, it tastes of chocolate, but there's a delayed-action kick of pepper, and it's quite a kick; $15 a pound. The packaging here has always been classy, and this year the shop has added a supply of wire containers in many shapes. The workman's-lunchbox model is $15, and, filled with various confections, it makes a great present. Manhattan Fruitier, 210 East 6th Street, is close by, and sells a poundcake, by Shelley Boris, called a Basque Aromatic Loaf. Among the flavorings are vanilla, orange-flower water, rum, anisette, Armagnac, and lemon. It's glazed, with a star anise on top. The taste is complex and unusual, and the cake comes in a kraft box tied with red waxed cord, for $15.

Zabar's own California olive oil—virgin, first cold-press—is green, and fruitier than Zabar's own Italian olive oil, and costs about five cents more per ounce; $5.98 for twenty-four ounces. Petrossian, 182 West 58th Street, packs five little jars with thirty grams each of beluga, ossetra, sevruga, and pressed caviar, plus salmon roe, into an insulated navy cube-shaped bag. That's about two teaspoons per jar; $134. (This is also at Bloomingdale's.) To proceed from the absurd to the ridiculous: Eli Zabar, of E.A.T., 1064 Madison Avenue (81st), is offering a white truffle in a basket, with a slicer and "Ode to a Truffle," which is a paean to the truffle interwoven with recipe hints; $250, more or less.

At Christmastime, most people prefer to be their own general contractor rather than have an entire meal catered, and the following are suggestions to help the contractor survive the season. David Kron, 115 East 87th Street, will, given twenty-four hours' notice, compose what he calls an Hors d'Oeuvre Kit, and others might call a post-Hors d'Oeuvre Kit. It consists of a quart of mushroom consommé and twelve piroshkis in a tree-shaped box that you will want to keep. The contents are just what's needed after a cocktail party, and can be frozen; $15. No deliveries; telephone 722-4508. Yura & Company, 1650 Third Avenue (92nd), has been focussing on Christmas Eve, when, traditionally, fish is eaten, and has come up with a seafood sausage (mostly scallops and shrimp) that is served with a light sauce made of fish stock, saffron, and cream, and comes with a timbale of couscous and chives. The sausage is almost like a quenelle, and it is sublime; $10 for half a pound, accompanied by the sauce and the couscous. An alternative is salmon chowder, which is less rich but equally satisfying. It's made with milk, not cream, and besides the fish it contains potatoes, corn, carrots, and onions; $9 a quart. Other inventive fare here that's well worth investigating: a kosher turkey breast, rolled and stuffed with a traditional stuffing ($7 for half a pound), accompanied by a cranberry-kumquat compote (try saying that three times fast); $4 for half a pound. Yura's tapenade is the best we've tasted: it's mostly calamata olives, some anchovy, olive oil, no tuna, and lots of garlic. Not something to eat while standing under the mistletoe; $8.50 for half a pint.

Breakfast on Christmas morning should be a little special, and absolutely no work. Ecce Panis, 1120 Third Avenue (65th) and 1260 Madison Avenue (90th), makes a braided loaf of brioche dough, with cinnamon-swirl, golden raisins, and pecans, and topped with cinnamon streusel (crumbs, brown sugar, and cinnamon). This bread was introduced last Easter, topped with an egg and a Christ-has-risen symbol in chocolate. It proved so popular that the shop brought it back sans egg and symbol, dusted it in cinnamon, and named it Encore. It flies out of the store, and the bread is also sold in quarter-pound and half-pound pieces; $8 for a twelve-ounce loaf. William Greenberg, Jr., 1377 Third Avenue (78th), is famous for its schnecken ("New York's favorite for forty years," its slogan goes); $12.35 a dozen for the

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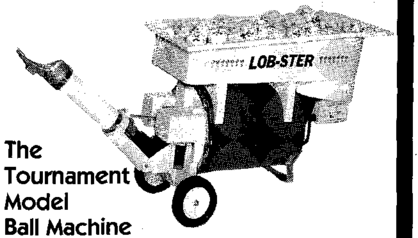

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baby size ($25.50 shipped); $25.80 for the regular size ($38 shipped). There's a new bakery on the scene: Amy's Bread, 672 Ninth Avenue (46th), owned by a young woman named Amy Scherber, who is also the baker. This is cause for rejoicing, because it's the only bakery of the calibre of E.A.T. or Ecce Panis on the West Side. The baking is done on the premises, and Ms. Scherber covers all the bases. A country-sourdough boule weighing a pound and a half is $2.25; a one-pound round of organic whole wheat with walnuts is $3.75; a one-pound rosemary round is $3.50. She also makes the best brownies around. They are neither fudge nor cake—they are *brownies*. A three-inch square, with walnuts, is $1.95. At E.A.T., Eli Zabar has produced a sourdough menorah for Hanukkah. It's also available made of brioche, with almonds for candle flames. Either way, one that feeds eight to ten is $12. While we were admiring the sourdough menorah, we tucked into some potato pancakes, traditionally served with sour cream and applesauce on the first night of Hanukkah. They have to be ordered in advance, and, boy, are they good; $3 each, including the sour cream and applesauce. What both children and grownups would really like to see coming around the table is Eli's chocolate bread pudding, with crème anglaise (a little thin, but never mind). It is sold in an ovenproof bowl, so that it can be warmed up, and costs $18 for about a pound.

With presents and breakfast out of the way, Christmas dinner is the next hurdle. For a first course, there's always caviar, but we'll move right along to smoked salmon. Michael Corsello, whose title is Counsellor of Macy's Cellar, swears that the Scottish smoked salmon at Macy's has never been frozen. It's $21.95 a pound pre-sliced, $26.95 if it's hand-sliced. Macy's can now send anything anywhere. Petrossian has always carried smoked cod roe, which, mixed with crème fraîche, makes a dandy first course, or it can be served on toast with drinks; $5.65 for a quarter of a pound. The store now sells it pre-mixed, and, somewhat confusingly, calls it Tarama. (It bears no resemblance to Greek Tarama.) An unopened jar has a refrigerator life of three weeks; three and a half ounces costs $6.

For an entrée, seriously consider a loin of lamb from the Cleaver Company, 229 West Broadway (White). It's en croûte, with a wild-mushroom duxelle under the croûte, and a lovely light sauce; one that will serve six is $50, and worth every penny. Three Beggars' Purses of cabbage filled with herbs and bread crumbs are $7.50. Of the desserts, a Lemon Ginger Mascarpone Tart with candied julienne of ginger on top is golden in looks and taste; an eight-inch tart is $40.

For a gala dessert, order a croquembouche from Les Friandises, 972 Lexington Avenue (70th), or 665 Amsterdam Avenue (92nd). It is decorated like a Christmas tree, and will serve from six to eight. Because it's labor-intensive, this is a limited edition and requires a week's notice; $40. Chocolate meringue balls filled with ganache are $16 for a dozen and require two days' notice. Soutine, 104 West 70th Street, continues to carry Susan Kluger's *echt* plum pudding in a white crock; a pound and a half is $25. Soutine also carries a pumpkin roll, either plain, with powdered sugar on top, or glazed and decorated; a plain one to serve six or eight is $12; one to serve sixteen to twenty is $30, and it would undoubtedly go over better with children than plum pudding.

BALDUCCI'S has rearranged the store, and around every corner there's something you want to eat. A few highlights: South African scampi tails are shipped frozen but bought defrosted, and when they've been steamed for three minutes they are sweet and tender; there are between fifteen and eighteen in a pound, for $27.99. A Venison Terrine Chasseur, in a white oval terrine, is basically jellied venison, with carrots and cornichons added. It contains very little fat, and has a nice lean taste; $17 a pound. A perfect crème brûlée, made by a man named Mitchell London, comes in disposable foil cups; $3.50 apiece. Remember Nabisco wafers? An Italian version, called Cialde della Nencia, with a chopped-almond filling, is the size of a butter plate, and looks like a commemorative coin; five are $10. A box of walnuts dipped in dark chocolate and dusted with cocoa powder would go nicely with coffee; $20 a pound.

Dean & DeLuca, 560 Broadway (Prince), is another one-stop store, and the first place to slow down is at the cheese counter, where Steven Jenkins presides over his cheese empire like a proud parent: he knows that not all cheeses are created equal, but the customer listening to his patter wouldn't. He has two wonderful Irish semi-soft cheeses—Gubbeen and Croghan. The Gubbeen, from County Tipperary, is a brushed-rind cheese that has been aged for four months. It has a strong nutty flavor, and costs $19.95 a pound. Croghan is a cooked-curd, raw-goat's-milk cheese, made by hand; $25 a pound. A surprising washed-rind cheese from Italy, Nevino, is practically liquid, and superb. It's sold by the piece; about three-quarters of a pound is $13.95. Mr. Jenkins is especially enthusiastic about Spanish farmhouse cheeses, but the most recent shipment hadn't yet cleared customs, so we couldn't sample any of them. When we asked about the difference between English and Spanish farmhouse cheese, he said, "The English is made from cow's milk and wrapped in gingham or calico and aged longer. It's firm and crumbly. The Spanish is made from sheep's milk, and is younger and therefore softer." His interest in farmhouse cheese has been stimulated by a new import, called fruit cheese, which turns out not to be cheese but, rather, a highly concentrated fruit jelly meant to be eaten with farmhouse cheese. The two complement each other, and the jellies come in several luscious flavors; $13 a pound. Carmine Dellaporta, in the charcuterie department, reports that his salmon roe from Alaska is *extra* good, and it was indeed pristine, and not too salty; it's $26 a pound. Mr. Dellaporta makes a Country Zampino (salami *cotto*) that looks like a country pâté but is a sausage. He uses lean meat, so it's not greasy, and adds white and green peppercorns and parsley; $10 a pound. Smoked *magret* of duck breast, made by d'Artagnan, is silky, and costs $30 a pound. A one-pound block of foie gras, by Rougie, is $90. D. & D. also sells the Nencia wafers and Mr. London's crème brûlée, not to mention edible teething rings to keep Baby quiet while parents shop. They taste rather like dog biscuits; $4 a pound. Ten "rusty" dark-chocolate tools, in a wooden toolbox, are actually solid chocolate. The rust is cocoa; $32. Small dark-chocolate bags constructed to look like paper bags are ready for filling with even more chocolate; $6 each.

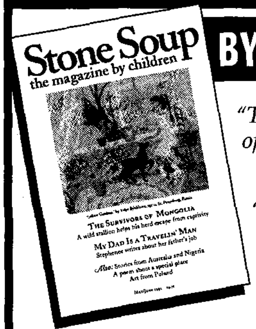
Tarts have now outdistanced quiches, and a new place, Once Upon a Tart, a sunny, attractive shop at 135 Sullivan Street (Prince), opened about ten minutes ago, and is dedicated to sweet and savory tarts, made on the premises. There are ten or twelve kinds of savory tart, from five inches ($4) to seven inches ($12.50). Mini-tarts—one mouthful—are available to order; $16 a dozen. Sweet tarts are $2.75 to $16.50. The best news of all is that the shop makes peerless madeleines, fresh every day; fifty cents each.

What was formerly Priscilla's, at 35 Jane Street (Eighth Avenue), is now Bonsignour, owned by a young Frenchman, Philippe Bonsignour, who is also the chef. Most of the baked goods here are still made by Priscilla, but the *plats cuisinés* are Bonsignour's. Pommes Darphin is like a frittata of julienned potato, and a frittata big enough to serve ten or twelve is $18. One stuffed with roasted peppers, buffalo mozzarella, and basil is $30. Other fillings are available, and it should be ordered three hours ahead. From Priscilla, a two-foot braided loaf with a choice of fillings, such as smoked turkey and spinach, is $50. Priscilla's ginger snaps, ranging in size from a quarter to a fifty-cent piece, are dark brown, thin, crisp, and delicious; $7 a half pound.

Christmas Cookies: Patti Paige, of Baked Ideas, has increased her repertoire of totally awesome gingerbread ornaments. They're iced in Crayola colors, and hang by a satin ribbon. Top faves are Babar and a yellow cab with a Christmas tree on the roof. They range in price from $6 to $10, depending on intricacy, and can be found at Bloomingdale's, Dean & DeLuca, Silver Palate, and Fraser-Morris, or ordered by telephone (minimum order of $50): 212 925-9097.

At Soutine, Madge Rosenberg has been constructing gingerbread brownstones, with and without stoops. Sometimes the door is open, sometimes closed (and red). There is one with a flat roof, one with a mansard, and one with a green "copper" roof. She is working on a drainpipe. The brownstones are five inches high, and charming; $10. Merry Christmas! ♦

THE LITERARY MAGAZINE



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NIXON'S LAST COVER-UP: THE TAPES HE WANTS THE ARCHIVES TO SUPPRESS

by Seymour M. Hersh

MONDAY, MAY 15, 1972: George Wallace, governor of Alabama and candidate for the Democratic Presidential nomination, is shot and seriously wounded by a gunman at a campaign rally in a Maryland shopping center. Wallace is a spoiler, whose third-party candidacy picked up ten million votes in 1968, many of them potential Republican votes; he is supported even more fervently in 1972, by Southern conservatives and Northern opponents of forced school busing. Now, with Wallace all but out of the race, the 1972 Presidential election is essentially over. Richard Nixon faces a traditional reëlection campaign against Senator George S. McGovern, of South Dakota, the most liberal of the Democratic contenders and the candidate most likely to be nominated.

Throughout the late afternoon and evening, H. R. Haldeman, Nixon's chief of staff, briefs the President on the shooting. Those briefings, and all Nixon's telephone conversations, are captured on the White House's secret tape-recording system, which was installed, on Nixon's orders, in February and March of 1971. By Monday evening, it is known that Wallace's assailant is a deranged youth named Arthur Bremer. W. Mark Felt, an assistant director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, reports to Charles W. Colson, Nixon's hard-nosed special counsel, that Secret Service agents have entered Bremer's apartment, in Milwaukee—apparently without a search warrant—and found it littered with political tracts and handwritten notes, including an essay entitled "How to Become Notable." The Bremer documents are being flown to Washington. Felt also reports that the F.B.I. agents on the scene will not enter Bremer's apartment until they obtain a search warrant.

The White House tapes, whose contents have still not been released to the public, tell what happens next: Nixon and Colson agree that one of Colson's operatives, a retired Central Intelligence Agency agent named E. Howard Hunt, is to fly to Milwaukee, secretly enter Bremer's apartment, and replace the political tracts and other materials with McGovern campaign literature. Colson paves the way by telling Felt, as he later notes in an "Eyes Only" memorandum to his file, that he and the President have heard rumors that Bremer "had ties with Kennedy or McGovern political operatives, that obviously there could be a conspiracy. . . ." Hunt packs his bags, including special C.I.A. equipment for disguising his facial features, and makes a plane reservation.

Nixon is energized and excited by what seems to be the ultimate political dirty trick: the F.B.I. and the Milwaukee police will be convinced, and will tell the world, that the attempted assassination of Wallace had its roots in left-wing Democratic politics. Late that evening, however, Colson reluctantly reports to the President that Hunt is unable to make the trip, because the F.B.I. has moved too quickly. Bremer's apartment has been sealed, and is under police guard. The President berates Colson for not having slowed down the F.B.I. Subsequently, Nixon is heard complaining about the missed opportunity to damage McGovern, and about the F.B.I.'s sudden competence in sealing Bremer's apartment.

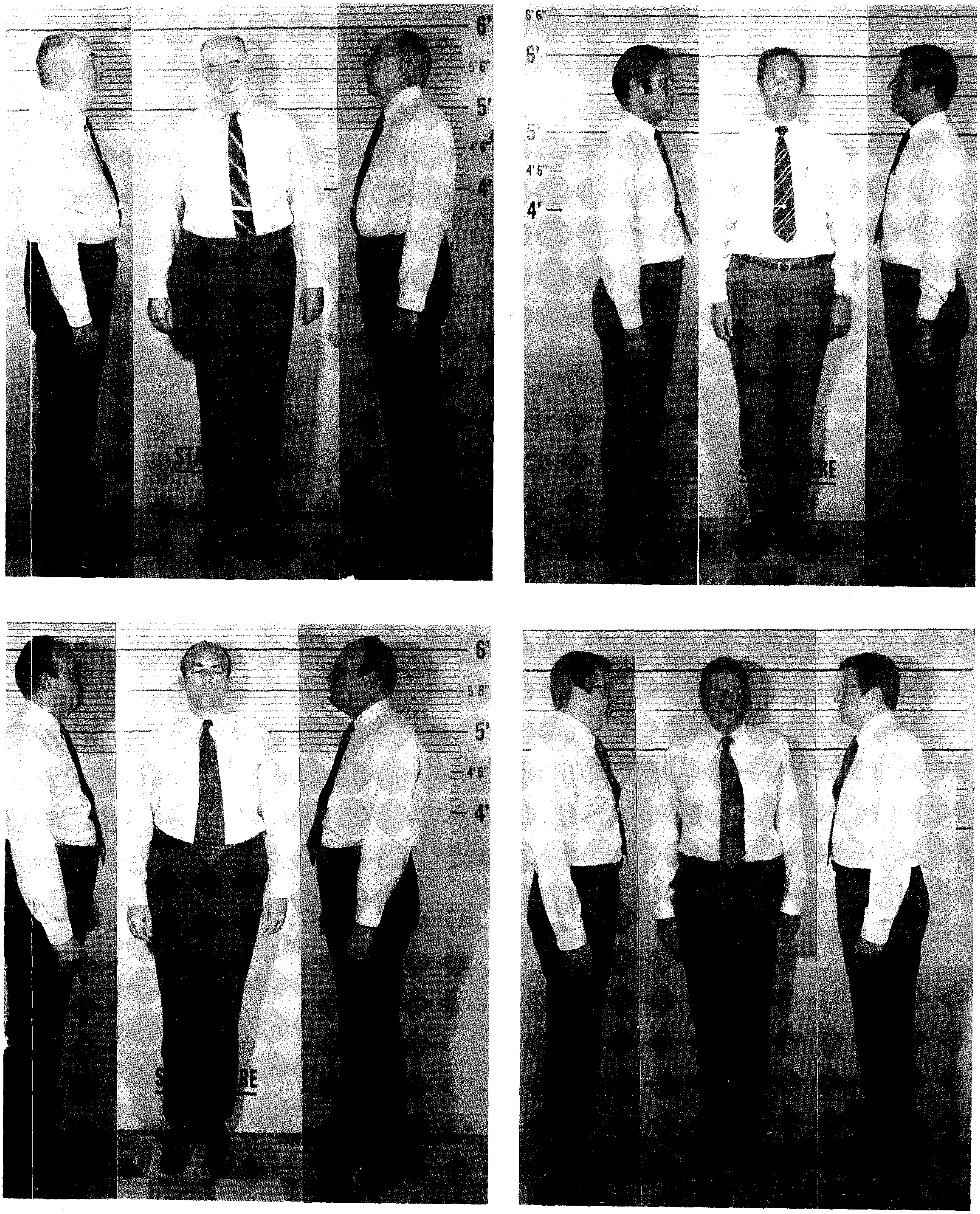
Nothing about planting McGovern literature in Milwaukee is uncovered during the various Watergate investigations over the next two years, nor is it described in any of the participants' memoirs. Nixon, in his autobiography, "RN," tells of an emotional hospital meeting with Wallace, a few days after the shooting, that ends with a salute by Wallace to his Commander-in-Chief. "I saluted back," Nixon writes. Hunt, in *his* autobiography, "Undercover," is disingenuous about the incident, writing that Colson urged him only to "take a look at the apartment." (A month later, Hunt plays a key role in the Watergate break-in.)

In a recent interview, Colson, a born-again Christian who now directs a successful prison-ministry organization, publicly acknowledged for the first time that the tapes had it right: he and Nixon did conspire to send Howard Hunt to Milwaukee to plant McGovern literature in Bremer's apartment. Colson told me in that interview, "It began with Nixon saying to me, 'Whose side is he on—right- or left-winger?' " Colson then left the Oval Office to track down Hunt, and Hunt volunteered, Colson says, to fly to Milwaukee and try and break into the apartment. "I went back and told the President that Hunt can find out about Bremer. Nixon said, 'It'd be great to get him out there and put some things in.' But I don't know which one of us actually said, 'Too bad we can't plant McGovern literature.' "

The tapes of his telephone and Oval Office talks with Nixon captured "the black side to our natures," Colson added. "We were constantly saying, 'Can we do this or that?' Like catching Teddy Kennedy in bed. It was both of us. We were spontaneous combustion." Obviously pained but obviously trying to be honest, Colson acknowledged that he dreaded the complete release of the White House tapes. So does Richard Nixon.

ON June 28, 1977, three years after Nixon resigned his Presidency in disgrace, the Supreme Court, by a vote of seven to two, upheld congressional legislation mandating that all the documents of the Nixon Administration—perhaps forty-two million pages, and some four thousand hours of tape recordings, on nine hundred and fifty reels—be taken out of his hands and placed under the control of the National Archives and Records Administration. It was, or should have been, a staggering defeat for Nixon.

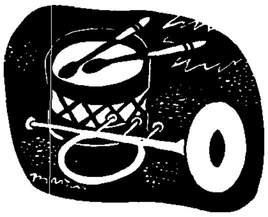
The Archives, a nondescript federal agency whose primary function is to serve as a depository for federal records, and to manage the collected papers at



Voices on the tapes: John Mitchell, H.R. Haldeman, Charles Colson, and John Ehrlichman (clockwise from top left). These previously unpublished photographs were taken after the four defendants were arraigned before Judge John J. Sirica on March 9, 1974, on grand-jury indictments in the Watergate cover-up. Ehrlichman has acknowledged that release of the tapes "will be uncomfortable and embarrassing for me, as well as others who worked in the Nixon White House."

the nation's nine Presidential libraries (Hoover, Roosevelt, Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Ford, Carter, and Reagan), had been ordered by Congress to devise procedures for the speedy sorting of the Nixon papers and tape recordings; the legislation emphasized "the need to provide the public with the full truth, at the earliest reasonable date, of the abuses of governmental power popularly identified under the generic term 'Watergate.'" The Archives was further instructed to go beyond Watergate and make public "those materials which have general historic significance."

The Supreme Court decision ended, or seemed to end, what had become a lawyers' fight over what to do with Nixon's White House documents. On September 8, 1974, the day he was publicly pardoned by President Gerald R. Ford, Nixon had signed an agreement with the government calling for all his papers and tape recordings to be deposited, under shared custody with the government, at a facility near his retirement home, in California. The agreement gave Nixon the unilateral right to destroy any tape he wished after five years, with all the remaining tapes to be destroyed after ten years or at the time of his death, whichever event came first. An angry Congress intervened and, in passing the Presidential Recordings and Materials Preservation Act in December of 1974, regained government control of the Nixon materials. Nixon immediately filed suit in the United States District Court in Washington.



In legal briefs challenging the law Nixon and his attorneys contended that continued government possession of his papers and tape recordings violated not only his constitutional right to privacy but also the doctrine of executive privilege—the right of all Presidents to protect the confidentiality of high-level communications. In upholding the constitutionality of the legislation, the Supreme Court told Nixon that he would simply have to trust the ability of the Archives, which had been processing Presidential papers since its creation, in 1934, to handle his secrets. "These very personnel have performed the identical task in each of the Presidential libraries without any suggestion that such activity has in any way interfered with executive confidentiality," Justice William Brennan wrote.

Nixon's main concern has been not the White House documents on file but the four thousand hours of tape recordings made in his office and on telephones at the White House and at Camp David, the Presidential retreat in Maryland. In early August of 1974, those tapes had provided the famed "smoking gun"—Nixon's June 23, 1972, conversations with Bob Haldeman, in which it was agreed that the President and his chief of staff would lie to L. Patrick Gray, the acting director of the F.B.I., and instruct him to "stay the hell out of" Watergate, because he would interfere with an ongoing and ostensibly legitimate C.I.A. operation. The tape made Nixon's resignation—or his impeachment and conviction—inevitable. The nation had already responded with horror months earlier, when the initial release of the Watergate tapes revealed a vulgar and sometimes befuddled President with an appetite for betrayal and intrigue.

By mid-1987, after ten years of work, all nine hundred and fifty reels of the Nixon tapes had been processed and were ready for public release. And yet, more than five years later, none of the Presidential tape recordings, except for the few prepared in the mid-nineteen-seventies by the Watergate Special Prosecution Force, have been made public by the Archives. The Watergate tapes that have been released amount to sixty hours—less than two per cent of those processed by the National Archives—and all of them had been subpoenaed.

All this means that Richard Nixon is winning one of the most significant battles of his life after Watergate: he is keeping the full story of what happened in his White House from the public and, in doing so, is defying the clear intent of Congress and the Supreme Court. The former President has invested millions to hire a team of skilled attorneys, led by R. Stan Mortenson and Herbert John Miller, Jr., who, matching their client's intensity and determination, have orchestrated a delaying action inside the National Archives since 1977. Jack Miller, a former high-level Justice Department official, refused to be interviewed for this article, saying, "I can't talk and I won't talk," but in previous statements he had espoused the thesis that all Nixon's conversations should be kept private. "If he elects to be profane with an adviser, solicitous of a particular congressman, or contemptuous of a political adviser, he can do so without being inhibited by the specter of the prying eye or the uninvited ear," Miller was quoted as saying in the Los Angeles *Times* in 1981.

Miller's broad view of what on the White House tapes can and cannot be made public seems to be shared today by some people in the top management of the Archives, to the dismay of the working archivists on the Nixon project, who invested a decade in preparing the tapes for public dissemination. The project is now in shambles, and the usually placid Archives—archivists are, after all, historians and librarians—has been torn apart by a bitter dispute over Nixon's right to privacy. The internal bickering and polarization have made it unavoidable that some of the secrets that Richard Nixon so desperately wanted kept secret are beginning to seep out.

FROM the first playing, the carefully edited Nixon tapes made public in 1974 provoked fascination and disgust, along with a sense of awe. But the unexpurgated Nixon, as he came across hour by hour on the Secret Service reels of tape that were delivered to the National Archives, was immensely more revealing. Those tapes provided the basis for the new information about and insights into the Nixon Presidency in this article. No outsiders had ever had such unfettered access to the secret and special world of the Oval Office. Occasionally, there were laughs, after Nixon met privately with foreign leaders, such as Anatoly Dobrynin, the Soviet Ambassador, and then described those meetings in increasingly colorful language to Bob Haldeman and, later, to Henry Kissinger, his national-security adviser. By the second telling, Nixon had turned what had been a calm and rational discussion with Dobrynin into an almost comical finger-pointing exercise in being tough: "I told him, 'Look here!'" Sometimes there was dismay, as when the archivists heard the President improperly discussing pending court cases with Chief Justice Warren Burger, or personally setting a price for ambassadorial appointments, or doing nothing to prevent his aides from attempting to cover up a sexual assault by a prominent political supporter.

Nixon in private was very much like his public persona: an awkward and uncomfortable man who masked his unsureness by an obsession with details. Before a speech or a news conference, there would be long conversations with Haldeman about lighting, or the height of the lectern, or the placement of a microphone; before a state dinner, the President would ask niggling questions about the menu or the size of the tables. He seemed to be full of programmed lines. In telephoning male colleagues who were hospitalized, he invariably, and lamely, asked if the nurses were pretty. His inability to cope with family tensions often led to inanities. Many a husband, for example, has had difficulty putting up with extended visits from his wife’s old friends, but visits from Helene Drown, Pat Nixon’s best friend, became full-scale crises for Nixon. There was an especially long visit from the Drown family in early June of 1971, just before the wedding of Nixon’s daughter Tricia. Nixon had tried repeatedly to resolve “the Drown problem,” as Haldeman put it, in the days before the wedding, asking Rose Mary Woods, his longtime secretary, to intervene with his wife in an effort to get the Drowns out of his house. Nothing worked, and the President stayed away as much as he could. Thus, on the day of the wedding Nixon was forced to send his valet into his upstairs quarters to retrieve his dress clothes, and he dressed in his office.

The most surprising fact about the tapes, given Nixon’s determination not to make them public, is that they support the former President on a crucial point of Watergate: Nixon’s insistence that he knew nothing in advance of the Watergate break-in, on June 17, 1972. The burglary was the brainchild of a specially assembled Republican Party dirty-tricks team that had been authorized early in 1972 by John N. Mitchell, Nixon’s former law partner and former Attorney General, who was the director of the reëlection campaign. Mitchell’s team included Howard Hunt and G. Gordon Liddy, a former F.B.I. agent. The President knew both men, and knew that they had worked the previous summer in a special White House investigations unit called the Plumbers.

Despite the close Hunt-Liddy ties to the White House, and Nixon’s willingness and ability to use Howard Hunt for dirty tricks, the tapes provide no evidence that Nixon had been told anything about what Hunt and Liddy were doing for John Mitchell. The White House taping system obviously did not capture every conversation—Nixon did some of his business, for instance, while sailing on the Presidential yacht, Sequoia—but a dirty-tricks operation as significant as that undertaken by Hunt and Liddy would have been repeatedly discussed in long Oval Office conversations with Bob Haldeman if word of it had reached the President. Those talks covered the most intimate details, including the President’s relationship with his wife; it was inconceivable to the archivists that Nixon would not have been constantly discussing the Mitchell break-in team if he had known about it in advance, because the team had elaborate plans for wiretapping and penetrations during the Democratic National Convention, in July.

One of Nixon’s concerns after the break-in was the well-being of John Mitchell, who had been drinking heavily for many months. The tapes suggest that Nixon had removed Mitchell as Attorney General that winter because of Mitchell’s drinking and his growing difficulties with his wife, Martha. The tapes do make it clear that Nixon understood exactly what he was doing in covering up the Watergate break-in, but they also suggest that he may have gone along with the cover-up to protect Mitchell. Nixon had few friends in his life, and he may have thrown away his Presidency to protect one of them. If that notion is true—and, since Mitchell died in 1988, a full account can come only from the former President—it would necessitate a complete rewrite of Watergate lore, which has John Mitchell throwing away his reputation, his career, and his self-respect by covering up for the President in his public testimony at his own trial and in the Senate Watergate hearings.

Nixon’s fight to keep the tapes from the public is not a fight about Watergate or its cover-up, for those are highly publicized crimes that have been fully adjudicated. Within weeks of the Supreme Court’s decision in 1977, however, Nixon and his attorneys began negotiating with Congress and the Archives, presumably in the expectation that the tapes, once they were available to archivists, would provide firsthand evidence

I’M BEGINNING TO THINK HE’S CRAZIER THAN I AM.

of previously unknown and potentially prosecutable crimes.

THE COUNTRY ROAD

In the painting that hangs in our dining room
A country road, a dirt road, is winding up the slope of a mountain ridge;
It begins in pastureland and goes up through scattered trees to dense woodland.
It is a scene in western Pennsylvania near the farm where we went in summer
To get away from the heat of the city.

I say that the road "is winding," not "winds, "
Because, for me, the painting sometimes seems to be still in progress,
Though the dear lady who did it has been dead more than fifteen years.
Some days, if I'm alone as I pass through the room,
I may notice some very small alteration in the composition
As if the artist were still working on it.
A tree may have slightly changed its position in the landscape,
Or the farmhouse and barns in the middle distance;
A patch of color in the pasture or the cornfield of the foreground may appear different;
The contour of the mountain ridge against the sky has been moving.
Even in the direction that the road is taking, its curves are never precisely the same.
It's always a sun-filled scene, but the quality of the light may vary.

As my eyes walk that familiar road, where I walked so often as a child,
I see things I hadn't detected before,
Little things of no great importance, but I'm aware of them.

—JAMES LAUGHLIN

It was a crucial issue, as Steven Garfinkel, who was then the chief counsel to the Archives, recalled in a recent interview. "Nixon challenged the constitutionality of the congressional act and the role of the archivist," Garfinkel said. "The major thrust was that the act constituted an illegal search and seizure"—illegal under the Fourth Amendment. He added that Nixon won the argument with Congress and the Archives after it was agreed that "any criminal matters that we would have referred" to the Justice Department "would have been obvious targets as search-and-seizure violations." It was further agreed by all parties that the archivists assigned to monitor the tapes were solely seeking historical data, and could not serve as law-enforcement officials or deputies of the Justice Department.

There was a loophole, of sorts: nothing barred the archivists from referring to the Justice Department any possible criminal activity by Nixon's aides that was heard on the tapes or that appeared in documents. At least two referrals were considered. The first led to an F.B.I. interrogation of Colson in connection with Colson and Nixon's scheming to plant McGovern campaign literature in Arthur Bremer's apartment. The second possible referral, which apparently did not result in a formal F.B.I. investigation, involved Presidential knowledge of the attempted cover-up of the sexual-assault case. The tapes showed that Nixon and Colson had been flirting politically with Al Capp, the syndicated cartoonist famed for his "Li'l Abner" strips, and had schemed to find a way for Capp, a resident of Massachusetts, to run against Senator Edward M. Kennedy in the 1970 senatorial elections. The talk had led to action, and Capp had been persuaded in early 1970 to change his registration from Democrat to Republican. But the plan had fizzled, as many Nixon-Colson stratagems did—this one because Massachusetts election officials ruled that Capp's change of party affiliation had come too late for the election. Capp endeared himself even more to the White House in March of 1971, by taking the podium at the annual convention of the National Association of Broadcasters and castigating the three major television networks and Tom Wicker, the liberal columnist of the *Times*, for what he claimed was their bias against Nixon.

A few weeks later, Capp was accused of sodomy, attempted adultery, and indecent exposure in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, in connection with an alleged assault of a twenty-year-old college student. Nixon was worried about the allegations, fearing that Capp's very close links to the White House would become embarrassingly public. The White House tapes and documents show that he and Colson discussed the issue repeatedly, and that Colson eventually reassured the President by saying that he had, in essence, fixed the case. Specifically, the President was told that one of Colson's people had gone to Wisconsin and tried to talk to the prosecutors.

The Eau Claire district attorney at the time, Lawrence W. Durning, a loyal Republican, acknowledged in a recent interview that the White House had indeed sent an official to Wisconsin in an attempt to pressure him and others to drop the prosecution of Capp. "Some of my backers at the time did tell me that somebody in Nixon's office wanted me to drop it," Durning, who is now the senior attorney in the State Public Defender's Office in Eau Claire, said. "I did understand that Capp and Nixon were on friendly terms." He said he had been unimpressed by the pressure. "I'd been in politics for eighteen years, and it'd take a lot to shock me," he said. Capp, who died in 1979, was found guilty in Eau Claire Circuit Court in February of 1972 on one morals charge, and was fined five hundred dollars. Two other charges were dropped at the request of the victim, who did not want the case to go to trial.

Steve Garfinkel, who stayed as the Archives' legal counsel until 1980, remembered being consulted after one of the archivists heard Colson talking to the President about Capp on the tapes. "Al Capp was dead when I heard the story," Garfinkel said. "That's the reason there was no follow-up."

Nixon's relationship with Chief Justice Warren Burger may not have broken the law, but it was seen by the archivists as exceedingly inappropriate. The tapes showed that Burger was more than willing to discuss any issue with the President, whether it involved politics, Watergate, or cases pending before the Supreme Court. The Chief Justice came across on the White House tapes as little more than a groveller. Allegations about inappropriate Burger-Nixon talks have appeared several times—most notably in "Witness to Power," a political autobiography published in 1981 by John D. Ehrlichman, who was Nixon's senior adviser on domestic affairs. "The President and John Mitchell made a constant effort to keep in touch with Burger," Ehrlichman wrote. "On several occasions Nixon, Mitchell and I openly discussed with the Chief Justice the pros and cons of issues before the court." Ehrlichman's book specifically cited a long conversation that took place in December of 1970 (before the White House taping system was installed), when the Supreme Court was considering the issue of school busing. Writing about the Ehrlichman disclosures at the time, a number of responsible legal journalists concluded that Burger's willingness to "discuss" court issues with Nixon fell into a gray area. "On the one hand, Justices and Presidents have dined and consulted together in the past without ethical questions being raised," Linda Greenhouse, the Supreme Court reporter for the *Times*, noted. "On the other hand, any judge who discusses a pending case privately with one of the parties involved would be violating judicial ethics." It was impossible to assess Burger's actions on the basis of the "sketchy" account provided by Ehrlichman, Greenhouse wrote.

THE EDINBURGH COLLECTION
WEBER

"God is in the details."

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Ehrlichman, recently reached by telephone in Atlanta, where he now lives, laughed when he was told that the White House tapes showed Burger and Nixon to have done more than merely discuss issues before the Court. "It's true that you will find conversations between Burger and Nixon on pending cases—especially civil-rights cases," he said. "Nixon was hung up about busing. We were doing school integration in the South, and Nixon was feeling very pressured by the courts. He took advice from Burger. I was with Mitchell and Nixon when they discussed Burger's advice." What Burger was doing, Ehrlichman added, speaking with emphasis, was "in effect predicting how the Court was *going* to go" on the busing issue. Ehrlichman acknowledged that he had withheld the full story of the Nixon-Burger relationship from his book. On being asked if he had been troubled about the relationship at the time, he said, "God, yes, it bothered me. You bet it did."

The tapes record at least one occasion when a Nixon aide openly admitted that he was breaking the law. The aide was General Alexander M. Haig, the former Army vice-chief of staff, whom Nixon had named White House chief of staff in May of 1973, at the height of Watergate. A few weeks after taking the job, Haig, acknowledging that what he was doing was illegal, tipped off the President that the Internal Revenue Service was investigating the tax returns of Charles G. (Bebe) Rebozo, a wealthy

Florida businessman who was one of Nixon's oldest friends. Nixon, as Haig clearly understood, was sure to pass that information along.

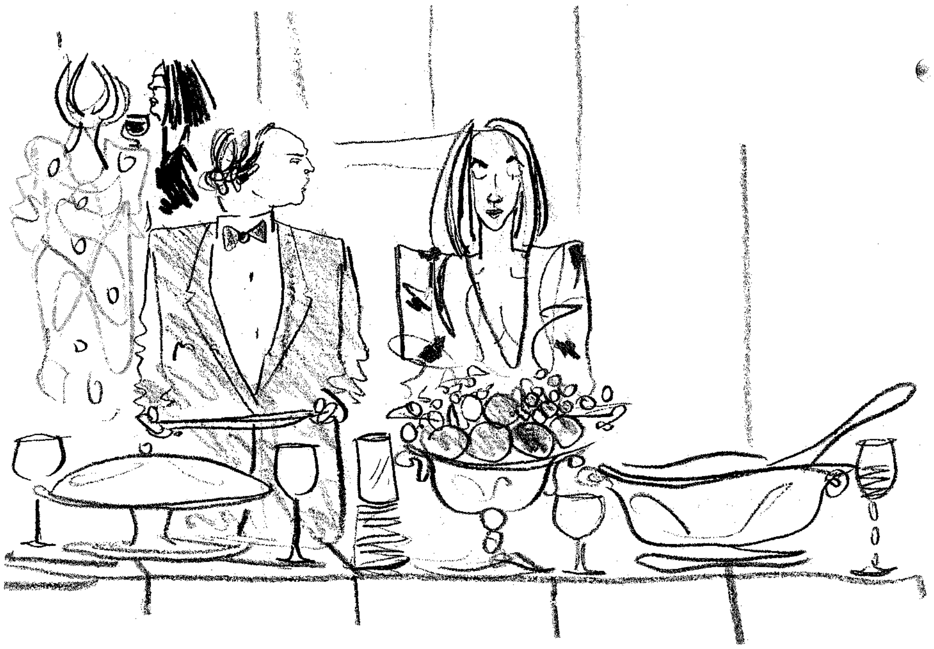
THE White House tape recordings were delivered to the Archives on August 9, 1977, three years to the day after Nixon's resignation. They arrived in poor shape. Some of the nine hundred and fifty reels had suffered from casual handling by the Secret Service while they were in storage. Others—especially those containing critical Watergate materials, which had been played back by Nixon and by Haldeman and other aides—were turned over literally in bits and pieces, and had to be spliced together before being duplicated, as all the tapes were, for safekeeping. Nixon had ordered the Secret Service to set up the taping system, which was known to only a few in the White House, in February of 1971, and the tape recordings continued until the public exposure of their existence, in July of 1973, at the height of Watergate.

Within a year of the tapes' arrival at the Archives, a small group of specially selected young archivists, who had spent their apprenticeship sorting through President Ford's gifts or Mrs. Nixon's office correspondence, was in place. The group was led by Frederick J. Graboske, an intense and energetic native of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, who had joined the National Archives in January of 1976. He and his colleagues were quiet and sturdy workers who understood that their political ideology must not interfere with their professional responsibilities. Graboske had voted for Nixon in 1968 and 1972 but had grown skeptical of his performance during Watergate. Maarja Krusten, who by all accounts was one of the most dedicated and talented members of the group, had been an enthusiastic volunteer in Nixon's 1968 Presidential campaign, and was—until she put in some years listening to the tape recordings, at least—a Nixon admirer. She had worked on the staff of Senator Howard H. Baker, Jr., of Tennessee, a Republican. She was eventually put in charge of training archivists assigned to the Nixon-tape project. The Graboske group had a strong sense of mission and spirit. "I enjoyed it," Paul A. Schmidt, of Salt Lake City, who spent ten years working on the Nixon materi-

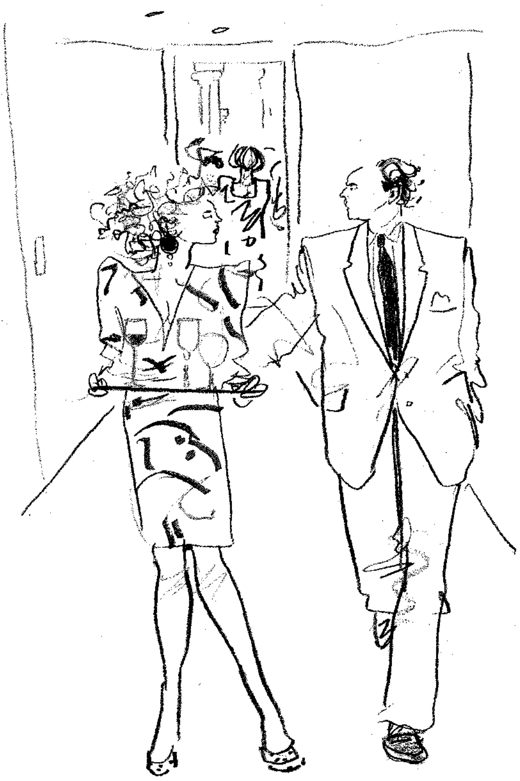
STORYBOARD

CHRISTMAS OFF FIFTH

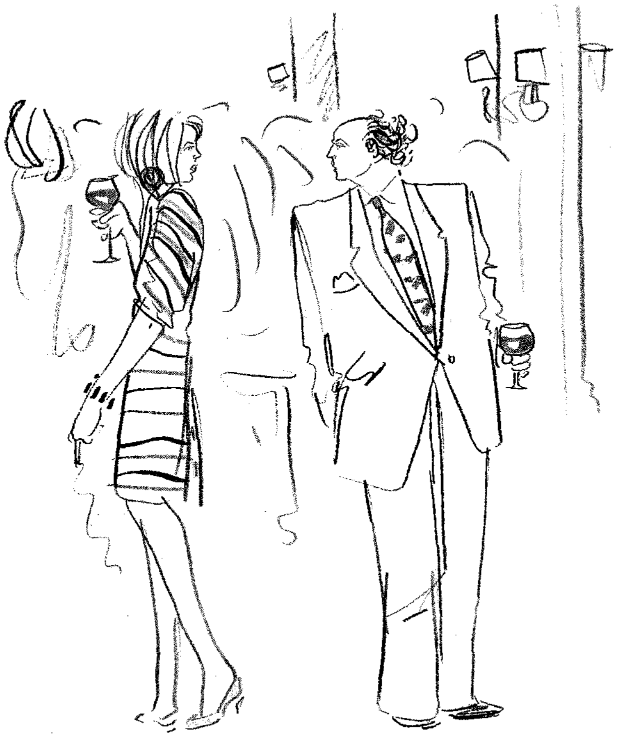
by Richard Cline



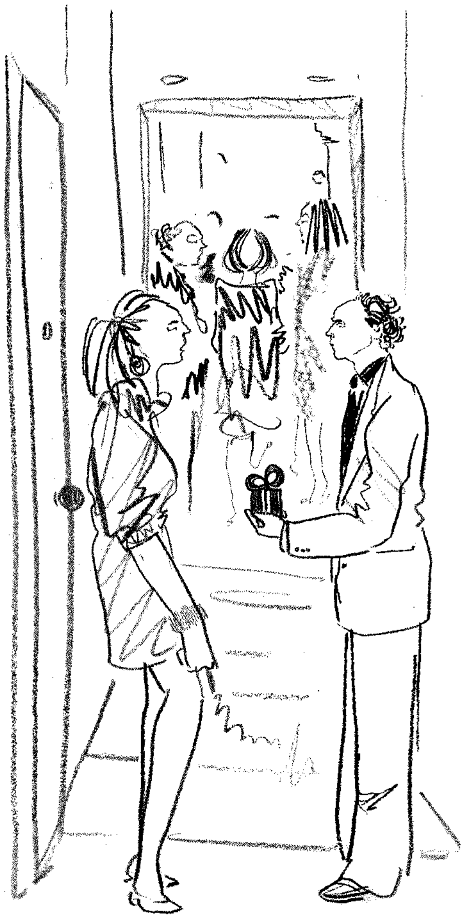
"The pepper ham is insane."



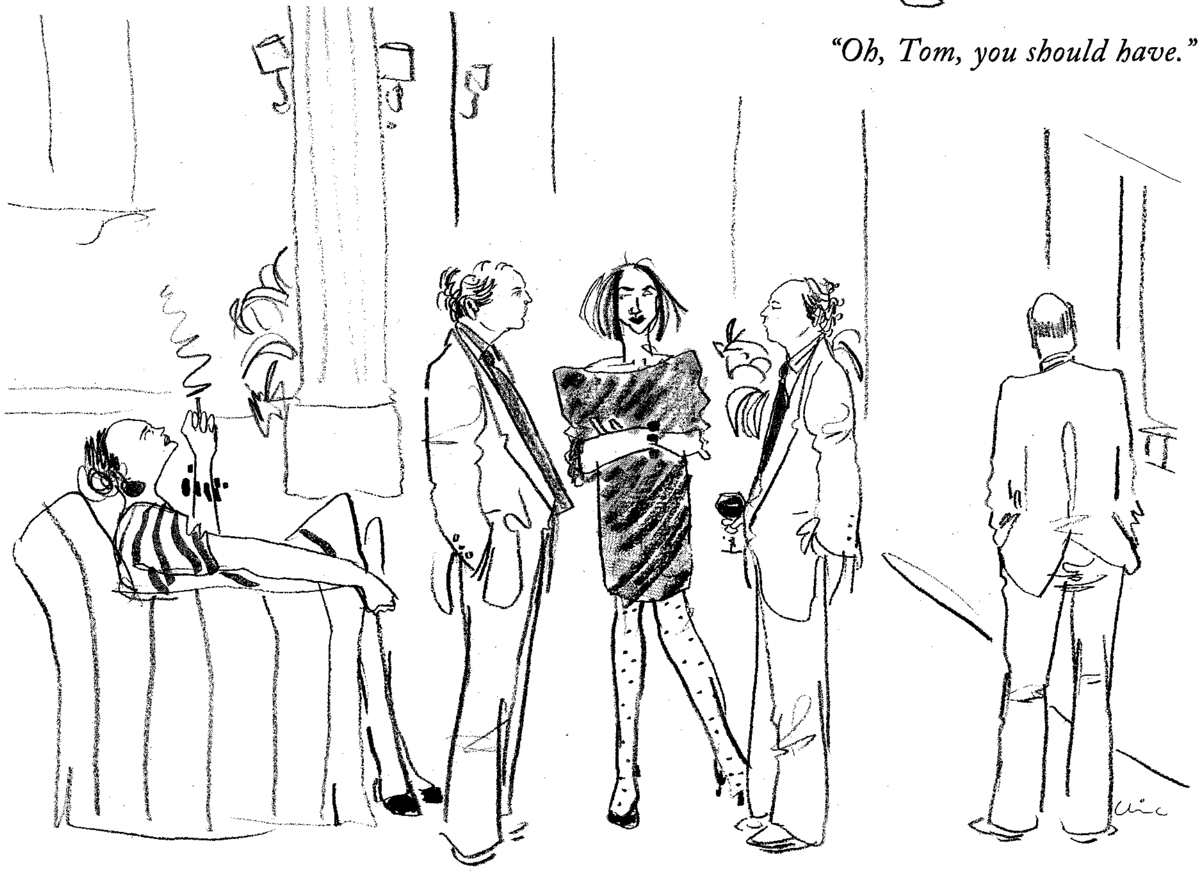
"Oh, leave that. I have elves."



"Rachel, have we wished the tenth floor a Merry Christmas?"



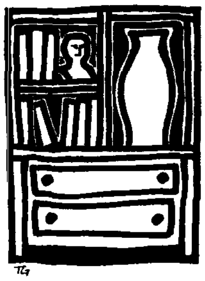
"Oh, Tom, you should have."



"It's always like this around here at holidays. Pandemonium."

als, recalled not long ago. "Day in and day out it wasn't thrilling, but there were moments. It was a status thing. You knew secrets." The group's immediate supervisor throughout the nineteen-eighties was James J. Hastings, a former high-school social-studies teacher from Cincinnati, who had joined the Archives in 1972.

Graboske served for eleven years as the supervisory archivist in charge of processing the Nixon tapes. He and his colleagues spent most of their days struggling with headphones and the Nixon tapes inside the Archives' tape vault, a small room sealed by two double-locked vault doors with tiny windows. The area was designated top secret, and none of Graboske's team members were permitted to enter the vault without being accompanied by at least one colleague.



The first mission of the archivists was to become familiar with the contents of the tapes. Then they began isolating the portions—dealing with Watergate, other abuses of power, and historically relevant conversations—that, in accordance with the act of Congress, were to be made public as soon as possible. One of the archivists' earliest discoveries was that there were nine different taping sites: the Oval Office; Nixon's hideaway office in the Executive Office Building, across the street from the White House; his Camp David quarters; the Cabinet Room; and five telephones, including those in his offices in the White House and at Camp David and also the telephone in the Lincoln Sitting Room, where Nixon worked late at night. (There were a few occasions, the archivists found, when a White House aide or a family member used the President's telephone to make sometimes embarrassing personal calls. Those calls were immediately discarded.) The reels of tape recordings from these sites had been filed separately, in chronological order, by the Secret Service technicians who ran the system.

Complicating the orderly review of the files was Congress's requirement that all relevant Watergate materials be isolated, reviewed, and prepared for public release before any historical matter. The Watergate prosecutors had subpoenaed and transcribed sixty-four Presidential conversations, but, the archivists found, there were literally hundreds of hours of previously unknown talk about Watergate, some of it obsessional recapitulation by Nixon. The quality of the tape recordings posed another hurdle. Astonishingly, the microphones and the other recording equipment used by the Secret Service were far from first-rate, and the archivists, some of whom worked with earphones for forty hours a week, often spent dozens of headache-inducing hours trying to decipher one perhaps important Oval Office conversation. (The telephone wiretaps were much easier to decipher.) In "RN," Nixon effectively described the difficult process: "At first all I could hear was a complete jumble. I ran the machine back and listened again. Gradually I could make out a few words, but at times the rattling of a cup or the thump of a hand on the desk would obliterate whole passages."

The archivists' work was disrupted by a seemingly unending series of court-ordered searches of the tape recordings which stemmed from the many civil disputes that arose from the Nixon years. For example, the archivists were subpoenaed to make special searches for conversations dealing with Presidential action against A. Ernest Fitzgerald, a whistle-blower who in 1978 sued Nixon for wrongful dismissal. (Fitzgerald was a Pentagon financial analyst who had publicly criticized military cost overruns, inspiring rage throughout the Nixon Administration. The archivists found and transcribed tapes that were legally devastating. In a January 31, 1973, conversation with Charles Colson, for example, Nixon said, "This guy that was fired . . . I said get rid of that son of a bitch." Later in the day, Nixon told John Ehrlichman, "The point was not that he [Fitzgerald] was complaining about the overruns but he was doing it in public." In 1980, Nixon quietly paid Fitzgerald more than a hundred and forty thousand dollars to settle the case out of court.)

Essential aid in organizing the four thousand hours of tape recordings was provided by Bob Haldeman's handwritten notes of his daily meetings with the President, which lasted for hours—to Haldeman's steadily growing displeasure, as expressed in his as yet unreleased private diaries. But Haldeman's notes were far from complete, and it was concluded that an independent log of the tape recordings would have to be compiled. By 1987, the log, which listed the participants and the subject discussed in every conversation, came to more than twenty-seven thousand pages. A small library of books and articles about the Nixon years was also compiled. There was still a lot that the archivists, as they realized, did not understand about what they were hearing, and probably never would. A few of the archivists were in their late twenties and early thirties when they began their Nixon work, and had barely followed Watergate or the Vietnam War (Graboske himself, however, served in Vietnam); now they were living amid the most intimate explications of those great events.

The guidelines set by the Archives for the handling of the tapes and the paper records were explicit, and closely paralleled the rules established by Congress and repeatedly affirmed by the federal courts. National-security material was to be immediately isolated and withheld from disclosure, and those documents and portions of tape recordings determined to be personal in nature were to be returned to the President, theoretically with no copies left on file in the Archives. In practice, however, the tapes being edited were duplicates of the original Secret Service recordings, and the archivists found it impractical to remove all the personal items from the originals. The working rules were carefully written to insulate the men and women handling the tapes and other documents from any official contact with Nixon and his attorneys. The former President was to be given at least thirty days' notice before the release of any White House materials; he would have the right—through surrogates, if he chose—to review those materials before they were released; a high-level review board inside the Archives would hear his objections; and, if necessary, he could then go to the federal courts.

One difficult question for the archivists involved whether Nixon was acting as President of the United States or as the leader of the Republican Party in his conversations with aides. If Nixon was believed to be speaking as the head of the Party, his comments were deemed by the Archives' formal guidelines to be private, and thus returnable. A determination that Nixon was acting as President did not, however, mean that everything on the tape could be made public. The archivists, following the guidelines, next had to determine whether Nixon's statement amounted to an unwarranted invasion of the privacy of any living person or a libel of a living person. If privacy or libel was at issue, the remark was to be removed from the tape to be released, but would be retained in the Archives. The murky question of what was private and what was not provoked constant dispute. Over the years, Graboske and his colleagues developed some general understandings about privacy. If Nixon was profane and derogatory in complaining about the official performance of a Cabinet member or the vote of a Republican congressman, his comments were releasable. A discussion of the personal affairs of a Cabinet member was invariably to be deemed private. It was a subtle issue, with no firm rules, and had to be handled on a case-by-case basis—and thus was vulnerable to attack by the Nixon legal team.

Mortenson and Miller complemented their barrage of federal-court petitions by closely monitoring the progress of the archival reviews. By the mid-nineteen-eighties, they had assembled their own team of paid surrogates, and the surrogates were authorized by the Archives to have direct access to the Nixon collection. They concentrated their efforts on the President's White House files, reviewing page by page each document to be released. The Nixon people, who did not have national-security clearances, could also listen to any of the reviewed tape recordings they wished, but—to the surprise of the archivists—they made no real effort in those years to keep up with the intensive work being done by Graboske and his colleagues. The few efforts to do so seemed halfhearted. On one occasion recalled by the archivists, a Nixon surrogate named Carlos Narvaez asked that a Nixon tape reel be cued up for his review. The archivists later found Narvaez's workspace deserted, with the tape running. Narvaez, who spent years working on behalf of Nixon at the Archives, had obviously left the tape going while taking a break.

The archivists made it a practice to formally notify the Nixon attorneys by mail of the results of each month's review, and each letter reminded them that Nixon could have access to the edited tapes at his convenience. The letter fulfilled a requirement and also amounted to an attempt to prevent Nixon's attorneys from insisting at the end of the over-all review that the former President be permitted to take the same length of time that the archivists had taken—nearly ten years—to go over the four thousand hours of tapes. The letters, the first of which was mailed in late 1982, had the effect of putting Nixon on notice that there were tapes available for immediate review; his reluctance to review them was theoretically at his own peril.

A CONFRONTATION was inevitable as Graboske and his team continued to work their way through the tapes, and as they continued to assume that the tapes would be made public. By the mid-nineteen-eighties, Graboske and his superior, James Hastings, were beginning to talk about how to release them. Should all the tapes be made public at once, as Graboske advocated, or should they be divided up into six-month packages, as Hastings proposed? At this time, Nixon significantly stepped up the pressure to prevent any release at all, and in doing so he was helped by bureaucratic turmoil inside the Archives after the Archivist, Robert M. Warner, retired, in April of 1985. Warner, a highly respected historian, was not replaced until December of 1987. His replacement, Don W. Wilson, has not been directly involved, at least publicly, in the Nixon-tape issue.

The immediate battleground for Nixon and the Archives was the official rules and regulations that governed the processing of the Nixon materials. By 1980, no fewer than five sets of regulations governing access to the materials had been promulgated, as Nixon, the White House, Congress, and the National Archives struggled, in and out of the federal courts, to determine who had access to what. The first three sets of regulations had been vetoed by Congress during the Ford Administration, in part because they gave Nixon too much authority in making decisions about which documents and tapes should be released. The fourth and fifth sets of regulations, prepared by Steve Garfinkel, among others, during the Carter Administration, gave the Archives clear authority to determine what to release.

Nixon sued in United States District Court in Washington, arguing once

"Just how do you propose to pay for this giveaway?"

again that the regulations violated executive privilege—an issue that had already been decided by the Supreme Court—and was told by the District Court that his definition of the privilege was too broad. Further court challenges took place, based, in part, on claims of executive privilege by a group of twenty-nine former Nixon aides who were mentioned on the tapes and in the White House documents. The Archives responded by establishing a high-level panel that reviewed the existing regulations—the fifth set. It concluded that a new set should be issued without change, and the broad claim of confidentiality by Nixon and his former aides was specifically rejected.

In November of 1985, as the new set of regulations—the sixth—was being prepared by the Archives, Mortenson and Miller held a private meeting with senior officials of the Justice Department, which was then headed by Attorney General Edwin M. Meese III. The participants apparently reached a consensus on a proposal that the Archives be considered unable to deal with Nixon's claims of executive privilege. Handwritten notes of the Justice Department meeting were made available to Congress, including one by a Meese deputy saying, "Archivist doesn't know what Exec. Priv. is about—regs do not apply this standard. They don't know how to apply Exec. Priv.—they routinely release deliberative documents." A few months later, the Justice Department drafted an administrative rule stating that the National Archives was compelled to honor any claims of executive privilege by Nixon, Reagan, or any future President. The Archives was then being managed by Frank G. Burke, a career employee serving as Acting Archivist. The Archives appended the Justice Department rule to the revised set of regulations without comment, but did not publish it with the regulations. The new rule, if left unchallenged by Congress or the federal courts, would reverse the procedures: Nixon could restrict any document he wished to, and the burden would be on the Archives to challenge his claim. The Archives had now given Nixon what the Supreme Court and Congress would not: a blanket claim of executive privilege.

The political cowardice displayed by the National Archives was thoroughly aired in 1986, during little-noted public hearings before the Government Information, Justice, and Agriculture Subcommittee of the House Committee on Government Operations, which has jurisdiction over the Presidential libraries. Frank Burke and Gary L. Brooks, who was the acting director of the Archives legal staff, stunned the committee members by testifying that they considered the Justice Department's memorandum to be binding upon the administration of the Nixon tape recordings and other materials. On October 3, 1986, the House Committee on Government Operations issued a scathing report, which accused the senior officials of the Archives of failing to respond to the Reagan Administration's challenge to its "statutory and regulatory authority" and went on to say, "That the Archives would abdicate its legislated responsibility to promulgate regulations and, in the process, misinform the public is troublesome in and of itself. When this abandonment is viewed in the context of past litigation . . . and the likelihood of future disputes concerning public availability, the decision . . . takes on even greater importance."

The committee members were not surprised to learn that the Archives' leadership had been placed under intense political pressure by Meese's Justice Department, one congressional aide noted in a recent interview, but they could not understand why no one on the inside had reached out to Congress or any other group for help. "These guys didn't let their supporters on Capitol Hill or in the archival and historical community know what Justice was do-

WHISTLING IN THE DARK

1.
Killiney Bay. Where she loved to come on a Sunday outing.
Nothing but the smell of bracken, sound of the tide
at White Rock. Nettles, wild carrot, and the hard green promise
of blackberries. Crow shadows pass in silence over lumpy grass,
their shadow-black headlong selves following: what truth there is
must lie in the gap of brightness
between those fleet shadows and the fact itself, its passage.

2.
The day of her waking and last exposure I remember
the dark cloud of a tree against the light, and remember
thinking of the various ways a body had
of being invisible: all that stolid wood and breathing leaf
washed out by light, being but an airy enormous presence
in the dismembering energy of light. Later,
when I walked in on her, I saw without preparation
the full provisional rigidity of death, that loved body—lit
by its history—become a lump of wooden absence
wearing a flowered nightie and the cold ghost of a smile.
Just another way of being invisible: the stunned temple,
cheeks fleshy but cold as stone, locked hands,
and nothing to break the silence between us
but the sound of my escaping breath as it brushed
over the open secret of her absence, stirring nothing.

3.
At dusk near water I'm watching the waves, the luminous rain,
and one plover scurrying over rocks and weeds,
whistling to its hunger. The foghorn moans
through gathering mist, and the hiss of rain on my head

turns my face toward town again, which is all of a sudden
lit up and glittering, as if there were some pattern to it
after all. The bird prods a small rock and I hear
the slight splash and wriggle of something alive under there,
and a whistle of excited hunger. Silence. Then the blind cry
of warning off water. The world gets smaller and smaller. Time
to go home, and I start, swallowing those two big words as I go.

4.
When I stand with my right hand touching the back
of her crossed hands, I can tell without looking
that the livid veins and that bright traveller the blood
have settled for snow at last. Aflame once
in the friendly element of air, heart's fire beating in tongues,
they've fallen asleep in a snowbank, breathing a small
black hole into the cold and sliding in, the way a snake in winter
makes a space its own size to sleep and wake in.
So, pulling the air in their wake, these ardent pilgrims
have turned to a world of snow, leaving nothing but one little
melt-mark behind them, shape of a starched white nightdress
where minute red flowers have all this time been blossoming.

5.
Out in the early morning, I see ebony pellets of deer shit
glinting with dew, and a few first fracturings of light
on filaments of moss. The white of a broken mushroom
is like the flash of a fish turning at the surface, brilliant and momentary
between elements, or like the gleam of a piece of steamed plaice
laid open before her eyes delighting in it, the fork dipped
then wavering to her mouth, all lost for one unfrightened minute
in the absolute shriven intimacy of expectation, taste,
the moister instincts ticking over. I have, across the table, nothing
to say, trying to fix this minute among its poor relations.

—EAMON GRENNAN

ing," the aide said. "We had to find out on our own. The leadership did not raise the red flag when it should have."

At this point, Public Citizen, the public-interest group founded by Ralph Nader, stepped in: it teamed up with the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, and in federal court successfully challenged the Justice Department's intervention. Public Citizen's argument was direct: in permitting Nixon "to foreclose public access to materials relating to his administration, including records regarding Watergate abuses," the Justice Department was in violation of "the plain language and clear intent" of Congress. Eric Glitzenstein, a Washington lawyer, who handled the case for Public Citizen, remains critical of the "far too deferential" attitude of the Archives' leadership toward Nixon. The top officials are "just bureaucrats who have never been imbued with the mission of getting the truth" to the public, he said in a recent interview. "The bottom line is that there's no public advocate inside, and without an inside advocate you have no way of insuring public access."

Amid the bureaucratic and legal drama, Graboske and his team got the job done. By mid-1987, all the Watergate materials on the tapes had been isolated, and all four thousand hours of the tapes had been reviewed and edited. Graboske was eager to proceed with his next project, as approved by James Hastings: an oral history of the Nixon Administration. Together with Maarja Krusten and Paul Schmidt, the Archives' leading experts on Watergate, he had already begun conducting interviews. In late August, there was an office party to celebrate the completion of the tape review.

The sheer bulk of the tape recordings posed immense technical problems. For example, before release the processed tapes would have to be duplicated on cassettes for easy public access. The purchase of twenty new cassette recorders was authorized. In April of 1988, Graboske sent Hastings a memorandum concluding that the duplication could be completed by late 1989. Hastings also authorized the purchase of a new, eleven-thousand-dollar computer system, with vastly improved search capability, to make it easier for the public to browse through the main listening aid, the twenty-seven-thousand-page log of conversations, which was still being constantly updated. The log was essential, because only copies of the tapes—and not transcriptions of them—would be available; there simply was not enough manpower in the Archives to produce transcriptions.

Copying the Nixon tapes onto cassettes was far from being the final hurdle. Every individual mentioned on the tape recordings in question who had asked to be notified had to be informed about their impending release and given an opportunity to object. Nixon, as the archivists all understood, would inevitably begin another round of attacks on the handling of the tapes, citing privacy and executive privilege. Under the rules, Nixon and his attorneys were compelled to take their privacy objections directly to the most senior review board in the Archives, known as the Presidential Materials Review Board.

Even with all the difficulties, there was widespread anticipation inside the Archives that the first of the Nixon tapes would be available for public hearing by 1990 or 1991. Public support for release of the tapes had been received from surprising quarters. In a 1988 article for *Prologue*, a quarterly magazine published by the Archives, Haldeman, who knew better than anyone else how embarrassing the tapes would be, wrote, "The time has finally come, almost fifteen years after the end of the Nixon Administration, when one may reasonably look forward to hearing . . . the White House tapes." John Ehrlichman acknowledged in an earlier magazine article, for the Sunday newspaper supplement *Parade*, that release of the tapes "will be uncomfortable and embarrassing for me, as well as others who worked in the Nixon White House." Nonetheless, "it is time to open the door and let the public . . . see the documents and hear the tapes," he wrote. "It is time to let the professional historians set out the events of the Nixon era with a clear, unbiased perspective that should be possible now."

GRABOSKE's completion of the tape review paved the way for the National Archives to finally release the last of the Watergate tapes that had been turned over by the White House to the Special Prosecution Force. The prosecutors had subpoenaed a total of a hundred and sixty conversations, totalling roughly forty-eight hours, but had made less than half of the material public during the many criminal trials of Nixon's men. The remaining material had never been released, although it was deemed to have little legal significance. Graboske viewed the release as pro forma, and so did Hastings—this despite the fact that Nixon had been fighting yet another furious battle with the Archives' leadership, over a proposed release of a million and a half pages from the most sensitive files in the White House. Mortenson and Miller had filed thirty-one hundred objections to the proposed release, and the Archives had been forced to find and then remove a hundred and fifty thousand pages from those files, pending a resolution of the objections by the Presidential Materials Review Board.

But only a few of those were Watergate documents. And so, in August of 1988, Hastings routinely sent a memorandum outlining the Watergate tape-release plan to John T. Fawcett, who had been named director of the Archives' Presidential Library System in late 1987. Fawcett's appointment had pleased many workers on the Nixon project; he was an old pro, with a track record of success and many years of experience in handling Presidential records. Fawcett had worked as an archivist in the Johnson White House, and had later been assigned to the L.B.J. Presidential Library, in Austin, Texas. Hastings noted in his memorandum to Fawcett that President Nixon had been informed "that we would open these Special Prosecutor tapes in early 1989," and went on to say, "We are on schedule and I propose opening them in February. I will submit a *Federal Register* notice announcing this in October to allow interested parties to come in and consider filing objections. I have no reason to believe that there will be any objections because all of the information is Watergate related."

But Nixon and his attorneys did object, in mid-1989, and they registered their objections by going directly to one of Fawcett's deputies with a list of seventy deletions they required from the tapes to be released, none of them Watergate-related. It was the same issue that had been haunting the processing of the former President's documents since 1977: Nixon claimed that the archivists were violating his privacy. The archivists suspected that Nixon's attorneys and his surrogates, including Carlos Narvaez, had been routinely meeting with the Archives' top management, and they feared that management was prepared once again to cave in, as it had caved in to the Justice Department's intervention in 1985. Fred Graboske, unfortunately, was no longer around to lead the protests: after eleven years on the job, he had moved on to an important new archival assignment, in the White House. The fight was waged by Maarja Krusten and Paul Schmidt; Joan Howard, then the Archives' leading expert on the Nixon papers, joined them.

The deletions Nixon sought were so insignificant as to make the issue seem absurd. In one case, Nixon had made an aside about the drinking problem of Martha Mitchell and the inability of John Mitchell to control his wife. The archivists had retained the comment because both Mitchells were dead and the fact of Martha's excessive drinking had been widely reported. It was obvious that Nixon's objections were aimed not at removing a few insignificant phrases but at the idea that yet another lawsuit over privacy could be in the offing.

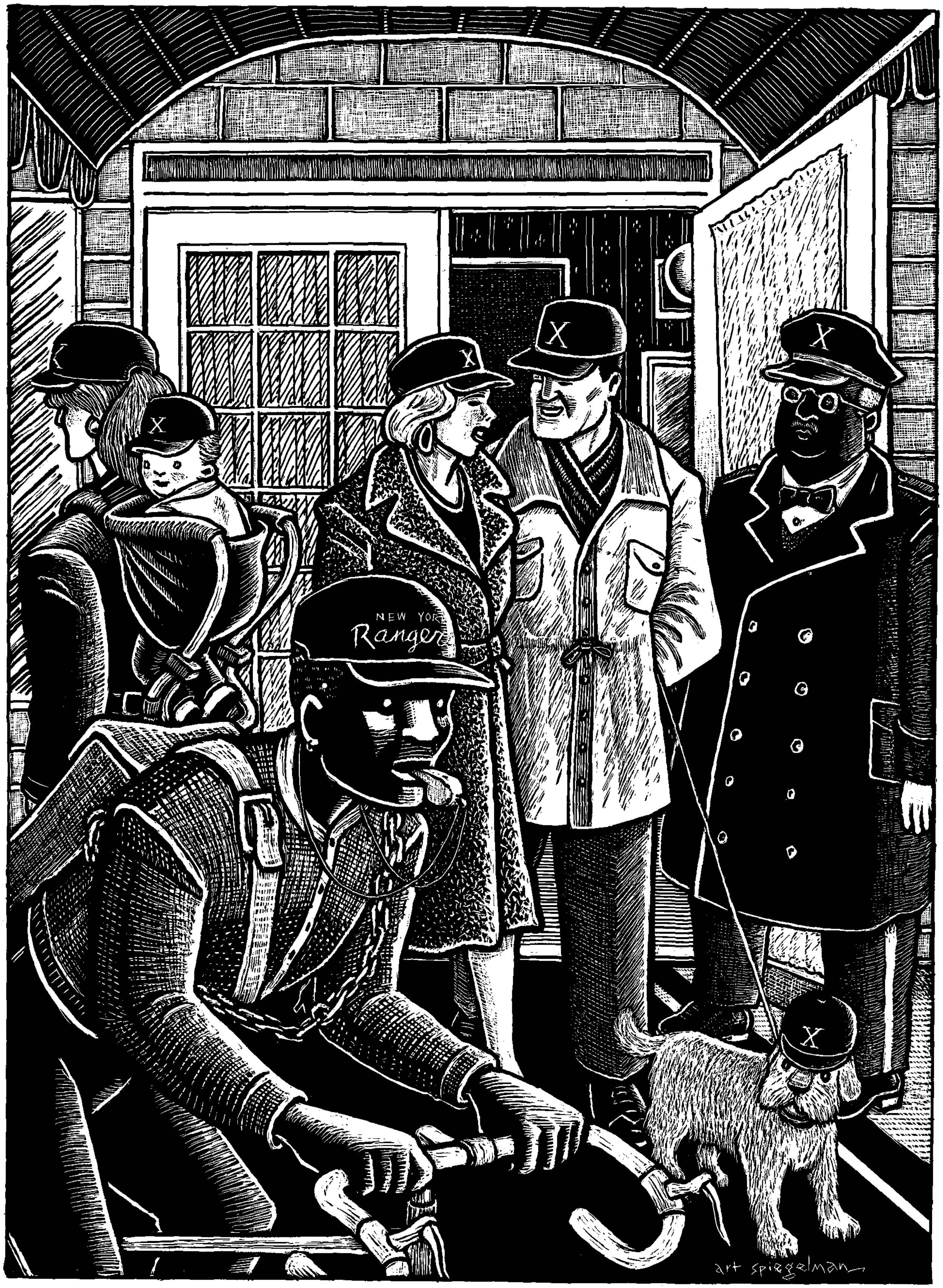
Krusten, Schmidt, and Howard, among others, met in late August of 1989 with John Fawcett and protested Nixon's intervention. Fawcett told them that in his opinion the Graboske group had been too liberal in its review of the Nixon Watergate tapes. The handling of the seventy contested items was nothing more than a normal dispute among archivists, Fawcett said, and therefore, instead of compelling Nixon to file a formal objection, as the guidelines stipulated, he had decided to refer them to a panel of senior archivists for review. If that panel agreed with Fawcett, the offending passages would be removed, and would be reported on the official withdrawal sheet as independent archival objections. Scholars and journalists listening to the tapes would believe that the deleted items had been removed by the Archives for any of a variety of substantive reasons, including national security and personal privacy. Fawcett explained to his colleagues that he was seeking to handle the tapes in a manner that was "fair" to Nixon.

The Nixon-tape archivists felt betrayed. They knew that the seventy contested items had reached Fawcett not because of a legitimate archival dispute from their peers but because Nixon's attorneys had taken them to him. If Nixon wanted to object to the processing of the seventy items on privacy grounds, his only recourse was to file a complaint with the Presidential Materials Review Board and take his chances, like everybody else. The odds of success there were very much against Nixon, the archivists believed, because all sixty hours of the White House tapes provided in the Watergate case had been screened for privacy before court use by Judge John J. Sirica, of the United States District Court in Washington—the Watergate judge—and also by Sirica's law clerks; another goal had been to insure that the tapes were responsive to the Special Prosecutor's subpoena. The archivists came to believe that Fawcett, who had listened to a few taped conversations, was merely going to do Nixon's dirty work for him, seeing to it that the deletions were made and also that they were recorded not as objections filed by Nixon but as archival objections. None of the Nixon archivists had faith in the senior archival panel that was to be set up; its members, they were convinced, would do what Fawcett told them to do.

Fawcett had set an ominous precedent. "When we heard the objections Nixon had, it was scary, because we knew the tapes were full of this stuff," Paul Schmidt recalled in an interview this fall. "If they were kowtowing to those little objections," Schmidt added, "it was frightening to think of what we'd

ARTIST AT LARGE

by Art Spiegelman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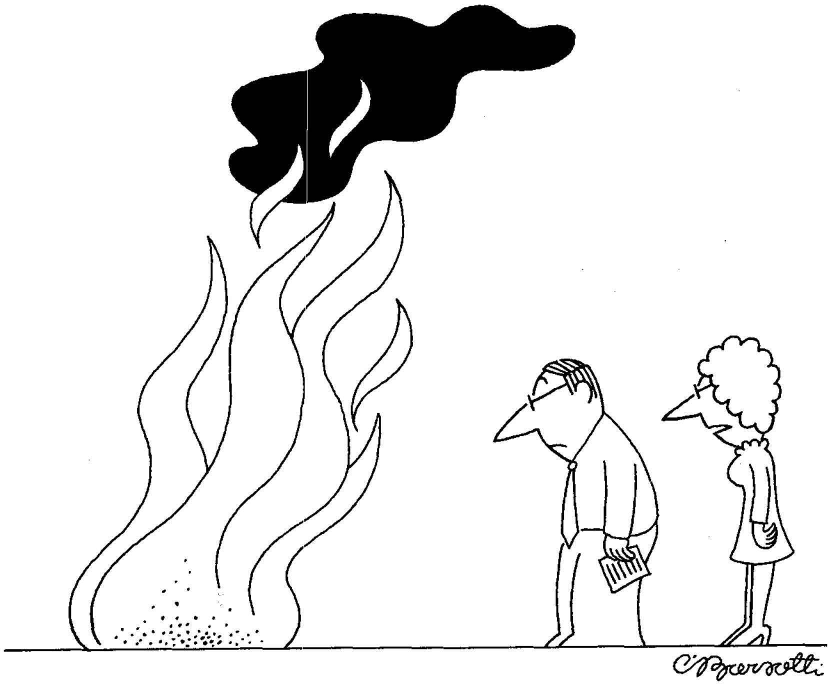
have to go through" if they were to get more significant material released. Schmidt was enraged. "Fawcett had not listened to Nixon for years and years," he said. "He did not understand what Nixon was about. We were the experts, and they never asked for our input."

Maarja Krusten later testified, in a deposition, that she had been appalled at Fawcett's insistence at the meeting that the Nixon deletions be recorded as archival actions. She quoted Fawcett as saying that "he did not understand why we were so concerned" about how the deletions got recorded, "because the end result would be that [the tape] would be withdrawn from researcher use." At that point, she testified, Paul Schmidt responded that he did not "feel comfortable lying to researchers" and that he "objected to being asked to do something that was unethical, improper, and possibly illegal." Krusten had already applied for another job: "I did not like where the project was headed. . . . The tapes were completed in 1987 and no further action was taken toward opening any of them. . . . That was demoralizing to the staff who had spent ten years working on them."

Fawcett's senior archival panel eventually sustained half of the Nixon objections, and the Archives released the Watergate tapes in June of 1991. The tapes made headlines, of course, with many newspapers emphasizing Nixon's 1971 decision, spelled out in the tapes, not to remove J. Edgar Hoover as F.B.I. director, because he feared that Hoover would "pull down the temple" by releasing damaging information about him.

Most of the revelations on the Nixon tapes were known to only a few of the present archivists. Graboske and Krusten had moved on to other jobs, and Joan Howard had been demoted and banished to a regional archives center in Denver. The original members of the Nixon-tape project who had stayed on were convinced that Howard was being punished for volunteering to join in the protest to Fawcett. What was most ominous was that the reviewed four thousand hours of tapes were still languishing on Archives shelves; nothing was happening.

There were now growing signs of an Archives-wide rollback on public access to the Nixon documents. The Presidential Materials Review Board, which convened in 1989 to begin processing Nixon's thirty-one hundred objections to the 1987 release of the most sensitive White House files, had all but disappeared by the end of 1992. The group's last meeting was in October of 1989 and the Archives' management has set no timetable for resolving the status of the hundred and fifty thousand pages of White House documents that were withdrawn five years earlier from those files. Meanwhile, dozens of archivists were continuing to process the millions of pages of Nixon White House documents, many dealing with key Watergate figures, and with national-security decisions regarding Vietnam, Chile, and other countries, though there was no sign that any of those papers would be released in the near future. An analysis of files that have been released by the Archives since 1989 reveals that not one important new Watergate or abuse-of-power file has been made available to researchers, although archivists have completed reviewing the papers of such men as Leonard Garment, the former White House counsel. The Nixon Historical Documents project of the Archives has instead opened files in the past three years on the American Revolution Bicentennial Commission; the United States Tariff Commission; the National Industrial Pollution Control Council; the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography; Social Affairs; Medals and Awards; Publications; and the White House Conference on Aging. The people at the top of the Archives are playing it safe.



"What I'll miss most is his indefatigable optimism."

IN February, 1990, Paul Schmidt decided to resign, in disgust. The Old Guard had a party, and Schmidt produced a poem that summarized the feelings of many. It went, in part:

There once was an archivist proper,
Whose career goals went right to the topper.
He enjoyed all his work,
From it seldom would shirk,
But then the faucet just pulled out the stopper.

Now, this fellow, he was a poor swimmer,
And his prospects, they kept getting dimmer.
But the work he enjoyed.
That, and being employed,
So, he kept his look out for a glimmer.

All the others around him were bailing,
And the glimmer of hope just kept failing.
Until finally he heard
Not a voice, not a word,
But the gnashing of teeth and great wailing. . . .

If there's a moral to this tale, it's elusion.
Maybe, "Listening to some is delusion."
Cause when big men make dealings,
And they lose all their feelings,
Breaking free is my only conclusion.

The full story of the travails inside the Archives began to emerge this year in the depositions and court filings of a lawsuit filed jointly in March by Public Citizen (its second in six years against the Archives) and Stanley Kutler, professor of history and law at the University of Wisconsin. The suit focussed on the unreleased four thousand hours of Nixon tapes, and asked the United States District Court in Washington to declare that the Archives had “unlawfully and unreasonably” delayed access to them. It urged the court to compel the Archives to make the tapes available. Kutler, an expert on constitutional and legal history, had spent hundreds of hours in the Nixon files while researching his book “The Wars of Watergate,” published in 1990. He struck up friendships with many of the Nixon archivists—who, like all archivists, were pleased to help a serious researcher. He began to learn what was going on. “In my thirty years as a scholar of American history, I have never known the Archives to appear to be so much of a political agency of the executive branch as it is now,” he recalled in a recent interview. “One used to think of the Archivist of the United States as a professional scholar. Now he has become someone who fills a political bill.”

Public Citizen deposed John Fawcett and other senior personnel over the summer, and learned officially what Fred Graboske and his colleagues had come to fear: the Archives had no intention of releasing the Nixon tape recordings reviewed by the tape project. Fawcett testified that the tapes had been withheld because an additional review was needed, to insure that Nixon’s rights to privacy were fully protected. “We need to go through those remaining tapes,” Fawcett testified, specifying that the review was to be conducted by a separate group of archivists. “It’s a final review for consistency in terms of our decisions in all categories.” Fawcett was unable to estimate how long that review would take, but he said that some of the Watergate sections could be processed in three years—if work began immediately. Kutler and other experts estimate that the Watergate material occupies no more than three hundred hours of the tapes: the question is whether any of the original four thousand hours of tapes will be available before the year 2000, if then.

Fawcett further revealed in his deposition that he had ordered those archivists still at work on the Nixon-tape project to concentrate on the processing of the Nixon Cabinet meetings, which were also recorded. On being asked by Patti A. Goldman, the Public Citizen attorney, whether he thought the heavily scripted Cabinet meetings were likely to be a source of Watergate material, he replied, “I couldn’t make a judgment at this point. I am not familiar with the content of these tapes well enough to do that.”

Goldman: “Yet in setting priorities you have tried to insure that the Watergate-related material would be released first. Is that not correct?”

Fawcett: “No, I don’t think we have ever set that as a priority.”

Fawcett refused, through a spokesperson, to be interviewed for this article, citing the pending litigation (as did all senior Archives officials). But Gary Brooks, now the legal counsel for the Archives, took issue in an interview with the belief expressed by Graboske and his colleagues that the review of the Nixon tapes completed in 1987 was final. It was understood “all along,” Brooks said, “that there would be a subsequent review.” The Graboske group “had a vested interest in their work,” he said. “They thought they’d done it and done it properly and felt badly that somebody would come along and want to review it.”

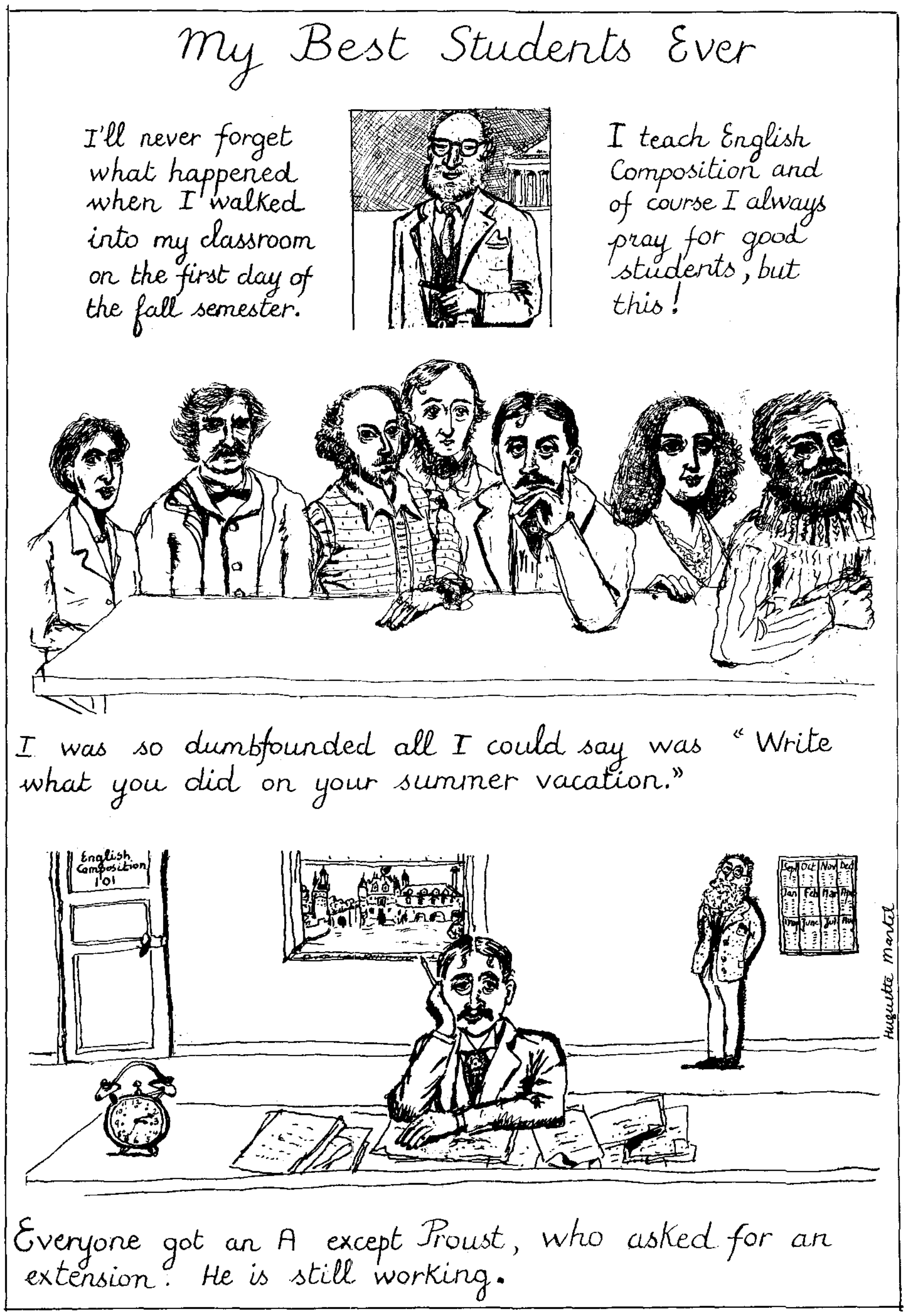
Steve Garfinkel, the former counsel to the Archives, who wrote many of the regulations for handling the Nixon materials, was present during my interview with Brooks. Garfinkel said that Graboske and his colleagues failed to “understand the complexity of the congressional statutes and Supreme Court decisions” on the Nixon materials—matters that had been uppermost in the minds of the working archivists as they processed the tapes. He also claimed that Fawcett’s more cautious approach to processing the tapes resulted from the Graboske group’s lack of sophistication and from Nixon’s propensity for litigation. “You have a plaintiff who believes that victory is achieved by delay,” Garfinkel said, referring to Nixon. “He wouldn’t be following this strategy if he didn’t think it was the right strategy. He’d have long ago given up throwing all the money into it.”

In essence, Garfinkel, now one of the government’s leading experts on security issues, was conceding the effectiveness of Nixon’s legal strategy, which is predicated on his understanding that the top management of the National Archives was more fearful of lawsuits than of official rebukes from Congress and the courts for not following their mandates. In the end, the Archives was reduced to anonymous slander. One official whispered privately to me that James Hastings, the longtime supervisor of the tapes project, had found “serious improprieties” in reviewing the Graboske work.

There was irony in the attempt to rely on Hastings, for he is seen by Graboske, Krusten, and other former Nixon-project members as a victim—an honorable man who was placed in a difficult position. Discovery in the Kutler–Public Citizen lawsuit produced a series of internal memorandums and notes written to and by Hastings making it clear that no re-review of the tapes was contemplated after the completion of the Graboske processing. Graboske and Hastings had agreed toward the end of the review, after a Nixon complaint, that a spot check of the tapes would be prudent, and Graboske made plans to review the twenty-seven-thousand-page log for clues to possible inconsistencies in the handling of privacy issues. Carlos Narvaez, the Nixon surrogate, found a personal comment by Nixon that had been overlooked on one of the tapes being readied for release. The goal of the last-minute review, Graboske explained in his deposition, was to give Nixon the benefit of the doubt: “Undoubtedly an agent of President Nixon reviewing the decisions we made would find areas of disagreement. . . . The further review was to be a cursory review by me reading through the tape logs looking for items that struck me as perhaps worthy of restriction which had not been restricted; sort of a cleanup, a polishing of the work, as it were.” The cleanup was expected to take no longer than three months.

The Archives documents show that Hastings contemplated releasing the first of the Nixon tapes sometime in 1991, as Graboske had already testified. Also, Hastings implied in his deposition that he had not contemplated any further review when Graboske and his colleagues began their processing, in the late nineteen-seventies. He went on to testify that he had changed his mind around 1986, when Graboske's work was almost done, because of "the complexity of the tapes and the difficulty of processing them and the fact that this was a unique project that had never been done before."

Graboske provided a different account of Hastings' beliefs in his deposition. He quoted Hastings as describing Fawcett to him and other archivists as behaving like "a crazy man" in his handling of the Nixon tapes—as someone who was capable of "retaliation" against those who protested the decision to re-review the Nixon tapes. After being transferred, in 1988, from the Nixon project to the National Security Council, Graboske testified, Hastings "expressed the opinion to me that I was very fortunate to be out beyond Mr. Fawcett's reach as he . . . Mr. Hastings, was not." Similarly, Maarja Krusten testified that she told her former boss—she and Hastings had worked together closely during the life of the Nixon-tape project—that she was worried about the lawsuit: "It was my feeling that the only way John Fawcett could defend his inaction with the tapes was by trashing our work. I asked Mr. Hastings whether others in the National Archives had bought into this characterization or would be willing to buy into this characterization and Mr. Hastings said, 'No. Don't worry about that. All of you did a good job with the tapes.' "


My Best Students Ever
I'll never forget what happened when I walked into my classroom on the first day of the fall semester.
I teach English Composition and of course I always pray for good students, but this!
I was so dumbfounded all I could say was "Write what you did on your summer vacation."
English Composition 101
Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May June July Aug
huguette martel
Everyone got an A except Proust, who asked for an extension. He is still working.

Graboske emerged from the deposition clearly marked as the ringleader by the Archives and by Nixon's lawyers, who attended all the Public Citizen depositions, and often asked many more questions than the government attorneys. At times, Graboske's three days of testimony turned ugly, with Stan Mortenson, the attorney for Nixon, in effect putting Graboske on trial by repeatedly asking questions implying that he was biased against Nixon. Graboske volunteered during his deposition that he had previously met with Stanley Kutler and the Public Citizen attorneys, as well as with me. Mortenson's line of questioning repeatedly implied that Graboske had disclosed contents of the Nixon tape recordings during those meetings, in direct violation of Archives regulations. At no time did the government attorneys in attendance move to limit Mortenson's questioning, although they were ostensibly representing the Archives and its employees. Gary Brooks subsequently refused to permit Graboske to be interviewed by me, explaining in a letter to Graboske, "All questions for information regarding pending litigation should be directed to the General Counsel or a member of his staff."

Graboske's pro-bono attorney, Patrick J. Carome, a partner at Wilmer, Cutler & Pickering, in Washington, accused Mortenson and the Archives of "attempting to intimidate this man who tried to see that the right thing was done to the Nixon tapes." Graboske was especially upset, Carome said in an interview, at the failure of the government attorneys "to take aggressive steps to protect a government civil servant at a deposition at which they were supposed to be representing the government." Graboske resigned from the Archives, after sixteen years of employment, as of December 4th.

Recently, John Fawcett again changed course: he authorized the archivists to make new duplications of the original nine hundred and fifty reels of Nixon tape—a sign that all the processing done by Graboske and his colleagues might be discarded. The ten-year review process would begin anew. The approach, if it is carried out, poses a fresh set of legal problems, because it could be construed as yet another intrusion into Nixon's privacy. The Archives, in the work of Graboske and his team, had already gone through the tapes and removed all personal conversations with Nixon family members, physicians, and the like. These conversations would now be exposed to a second set of outsiders. Furthermore, archival regulations and standard library practice depict re-reviews as exercises intended to lift restrictions because of the passage of time. There is no regulatory basis for adding restrictions in a re-review, which is what Fawcett obviously intends to do. And the Archives could once again be playing into the litigious hands of Nixon and his attorneys.

At the moment, the Nixon tapes seem lost to history. It is an incalculable loss, as even a sketchy summary of what they contain shows. Watergate was clearly the dominant issue of the last years of the Nixon Presidency: the archivists learned that when they plowed their way through the White House tapes. But it was the personality of Richard Nixon that stole the show.

The archivists found themselves appalled by Nixon's lack of character, by his emptiness. The tapes reveal not just that he was lonely or diffident; there seemed to be nothing inside. He had no real hobbies and no real friends. He was a man who would spend evening after evening in his office in the Executive Office Building, eating dinner alone, and telephoning aides to find out what "P.N."—his usual way of referring to his wife, Pat Nixon—was doing. His well-publicized friendship with Bebe Rebozo was empty: the two men would sit together for hours, sharing a few drinks while Rebozo would tell the President "Keep it up" and "You're doing a great job" and "Your enemies are out to get you." Rebozo had another function, too, according to the tapes: he gave the President gifts of cash for his personal use. The tapes also show that Rebozo bought a house for Julie, the President's younger daughter, and her husband, David Eisenhower. Nixon watched television very little—at most, a Sunday professional-football game or some other sports event. Even then, he seemed to be watching not because it gave him pleasure but because he thought that was what red-blooded American men—those who voted Republican—did on Sunday afternoons.

Nixon on tape is a man who saw himself as a lone warrior surrounded by enemies. Elections and election victories were only a means of finding opponents—people to beat up. That was why he insisted on putting together an "enemies list" before the 1972 election.

There was an obsession with money and an obsession with reëlection. By early 1971, when the taping system was installed, the Nixon White House could be described as the center of a big circle called politics: everything Nixon and his Administration did was done to enhance his political standing. And politics, of course, was dominated by money then, as it is now. Nixon was fascinated by wealthy men like Ross Perot, the Texas businessman, and Walter Annenberg, the publishing magnate. There was repeated talk in 1971 of getting funds from Annenberg and, perhaps, Perot to arrange for the purchase of the CBS television network. Colson and Mitchell schemed endlessly with the President. Nixon, with his need for enemies, was focussed on Dan Rather, then the CBS White House correspondent. The goal was to persuade Annenberg and Perot to buy the network, fire Rather, and make CBS a house organ for the Administration. The White House link would be kept secret. Public pressure could be applied through the Federal Communications Commission, which is responsible for network licensing. The preposterous idea was the driving force behind various public and private threats made against CBS before the 1972 election.

MAILBOX

To the Editor:

Raymond Bonner's "A Woman's Place" (November 16th) also applies to some Kuwaiti employers abroad. Last year, at the London offices of Anti-Slavery International (ASI), I learned of the case of Laxmi Swami, a woman from southern India who had been a servant to two Kuwaiti princesses who had taken up residence in England. Over a four-year period, Laxmi Swami had been frequently deprived of food and sleep, had been beaten almost daily, and had been forced to have two gold teeth removed from her mouth. In 1989, a High Court jury awarded her three hundred thousand pounds in restitution. ASI, which is one of the oldest human-rights organizations in the world, is currently mounting a campaign to have the British government more strictly enforce the law so as to prevent the abuse of domestic workers brought into the United Kingdom.

Ann Orr Deschanel
Boulder, Colo.

Nixon's anxiety about money also led him to play a role in the selling of ambassadorships—an activity that he repeatedly denied during the Watergate inquiries. In the Oval Office, he and Haldeman openly discussed the sale of ambassadorships—to what country, for how much in contributions. Nixon was insistent that those who wanted to serve in the more desirable foreign posts be told that their initial contribution guaranteed them the assignment for only a year: to stay longer would require more cash. And he often told Haldeman just how much more would be needed.

Haldeman played a far more substantial role in Nixon's Presidency than was ever made public. The tapes show that he was constantly giving the President advice on foreign and domestic policy. Nothing was kept from him—not even the most intimate Nixon family detail. There were times when Nixon clearly resented his dependence on his chief of staff and attempted to break away. In December, 1972, an earthquake devastated Nicaragua, and the Nixon Administration arranged for an emergency shipment of aid to be flown into Managua, the capital. Hours after the decision was made, Nixon telephoned Stephen Bull, one of his personal aides, and said that he wanted to fly in himself with the relief supplies—and he ordered Bull not to tell Haldeman about this plan. The tapes capture Bull's panic: how could he not tell Haldeman? Eventually, Bull disregarded the President's directive and did tell the chief of staff. Haldeman took care of the matter by informing the President that the security conditions in Managua were not good, and the President agreed to drop the idea.

The President's social awkwardness

often led to stupendous gaffes. On one notable occasion, Nixon was having his picture taken with senior officials of a major professional organization. The President asked about scholarships for blacks, and was told that such a program existed. "Well, it's a good thing," Nixon responded. "They're just down out of the trees." There was a stunned silence. Nixon truly believed, the archivists concluded, that blacks were intellectually inferior to whites. The tapes show him to be a racist. Pejorative words and phrases dominated much of his private talk: Jews were "kikes," blacks were "niggers," and reporters were "press pricks." Nixon's drinking was also unnerving; his problem was not that he drank too much but that he had very little capacity for handling liquor. One or two drinks would send him into slurring and sometimes reckless speech that was alarming to the archivists: it had been Nixon's finger, after all, on the button that controlled the bomb. Once, Nixon literally fell asleep during a phone conversation with Colson: The topic was the familiar "Do you think Teddy's going to run?" Nixon suddenly stopped *talking in midsentence. Colson stayed* silent for a long time, and finally began asking plaintively, "Mr. President? Mr. President?"

Humor was not a big part of Richard Nixon's life. Once in a while, however, the President could be funny—for example, in expressing his contempt for his Vice-President, Spiro Agnew. "They'll never impeach me as long as I have him here," he said once. He spent a lot of time plotting how to replace Agnew for the 1972 reëlection campaign. A legal question arose in mid-1971 about the Vice-Presidential succession, and an aide suggested that the President put it to John W. Dean III, the White House counsel. The President picked up the telephone and asked for his lawyer; it was the first time, apparently, that Dean had ever been directly consulted. "That'll make his day," Nixon said, with a laugh, as he hung up. On those rare occasions when Nixon tried to tell a joke, he was usually mystifying. There was one old chestnut about Al Capone, the Chicago mobster, and a prostitute. The punch line went something like "And big Al died of syphilis." Everyone in the Oval Office would laugh.

MAYBE ALL THIS

Maybe all this
is happening in some lab?
Under one lamp by day
and billions by night?

Maybe we're experimental generations?
Poured from one vial to the next,
shaken in test tubes,
not scrutinized by eyes alone,
each of us separately
plucked up by tweezers in the end?

Or maybe it's more like this:
No interference?
The changes occur on their own
according to plan?
The graph's needle slowly etches
its predictable zigzags?

Maybe thus far we aren't of much interest?
The control monitors aren't usually plugged in?
Only for wars, preferably large ones,
for the odd ascent above our clump of earth,
for major migrations from Point A to Point B?

Maybe just the opposite:
They've got a taste for trivia up there?
Look, on the big screen a little girl
is sewing a button on her sleeve.
The radar shrieks,
the staff comes at a run.
What a darling little being
with its tiny heart beating inside it!
How sweet its solemn
threading of the needle!
Someone cries, enraptured,
Get the Boss,
tell him he's got to see this for himself!

—WISLAWA SZYMBORSKA

(Translated, from the Polish, by Stanislaw Baranczak and Clare Cavanagh.)

Nixon was invariably kind and courteous to underlings—the secretaries and valets who worked in the White House. His courtesy extended to telephone operators: he would wait silently and without complaint the few times he was put on hold by an officious secretary or an unaware operator. He had the ability to turn rage on and off; he could be screaming at Bob Haldeman one minute and then be charming to the wife and children of a retiring government official who was being given his one-minute farewell by the President. Nixon's senior staff knew which side of his personality was the more important.

Charles Colson shared honors with Henry Kissinger for what the archivists caustically refer to as "bootlicking." Kissinger would tell the President after a televised news conference or speech that his performance had been "the best ever—positively the best." On the tapes the national-security adviser appears to be far more of a tactician in foreign policy than was publicly assumed—someone who was getting his orders from the President and carrying them out. Nixon viewed himself as a foreign-policy intellectual with a grand concept that revolved around the major issues: Vietnam, China, the Soviet Union, and Europe. The rest of the world could be handled by the State Department. The tapes also show that Nixon, despite his many denials, did use the "madman option" in foreign negotiations, and discussed it with Kissinger. The goal was to convince the other side—usually the North Vietnamese but occasionally the Kremlin—that you were capable of irrational actions under pressure. The "madman option" was little more than an implicit nuclear threat.

"Hey, great meeting! Thanks, guys."

• •

One official who did not seem intimidated by the President was Governor John Connally, of Texas, who became Nixon's Treasury Secretary. Connally once excused himself during an Oval Office meeting with Nixon to take a private telephone call—the only person nervy enough to do so in the two and a half years of the White House taping. Connally came across in his meetings with Nixon as a man's man, asserting his views and dominating the conversation. The President seemed awed by him. Nixon once asked Connally's advice before a major speech and listened intently as the Texan boomed out his opinions with Presidential certitude. "That's great," Nixon said, and then he went out and made the speech that Connally had suggested. The President subsequently invested hours in futile attempts to persuade Connally to replace Agnew as Vice-President; the last attempt, according to the tapes, took place just three days before the 1972 Republican Convention.

Nixon was not concerned with the details of many of his most important foreign and domestic initiatives. The environment and health care, for example, he delegated to John Ehrlichman. "Those aren't our people," he would tell his aides, referring to ecologists and environmentalists, "but go ahead and do it." Some of Ehrlichman's initiatives were approved solely because Nixon, as he told Haldeman, wanted to "keep John happy."

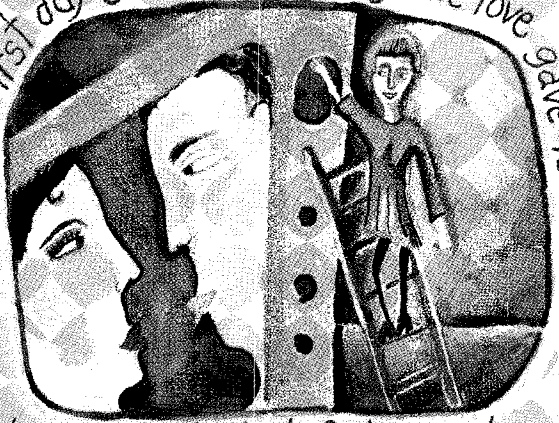
THERE is an element of opera buffa in the contrast between Nixon's ambitions for the White House tapes and his legal maneuvers to keep them from the public. His original plan was pragmatic: his private papers and the tapes would provide compelling material for a best-selling Presidential memoir. Nixon also saw the documents as a cash asset. Ehrlichman has written of a 1971 Oval Office conversation in which the President estimated that his personal papers would have a value of at least a dollar per page. "Some may be worth more," Ehrlichman quoted Nixon as saying, "but even my old laundry lists and grocery bills will be worth that much."

In 1980, three years after his papers were turned over to the National Archives, Nixon sued the government for unspecified cash compensation, claiming that all previous Presidents had treated Presidential papers as private property. That case was still undecided as of last month, when the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, in Washington, ruled that "history, custom, and usage" dictated that Nixon was entitled to be paid for the seizure of the materials. Nixon's papers were seized in 1974, the court noted, four years before Congress passed legislation making all future Presidential papers the property of the government. The Justice Department must now decide whether to appeal the case to the Supreme Court.

The Appeals Court decision did not challenge the National Archives' continued possession of Nixon's tapes, nor did it challenge the right of the Archives to process those tapes and make them public. Getting that done, however, may await President Clinton's appointment of a new Archivist of the United States. ♦

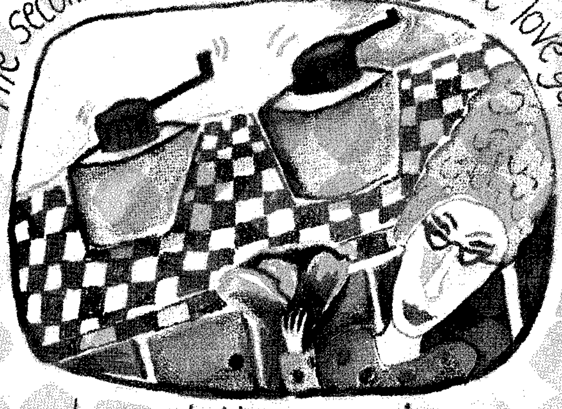
The Consumer's Twelve

On the first day of Christmas my true love gave to me



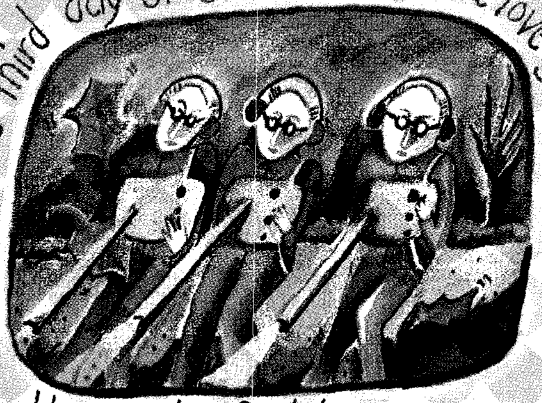
a two-hundred-inch high-definition color TV.

On the second day of Christmas my true love gave to me



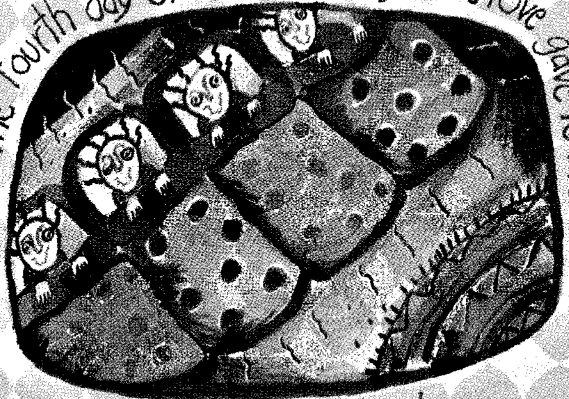
two lettuce spinners.

On the third day of Christmas my true love gave to me



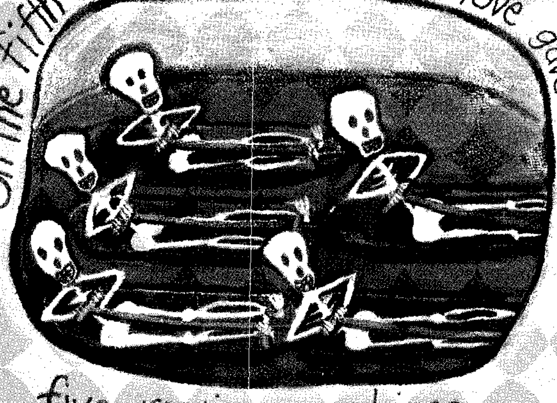
three leaf blowers.

On the fourth day of Christmas my true love gave to me



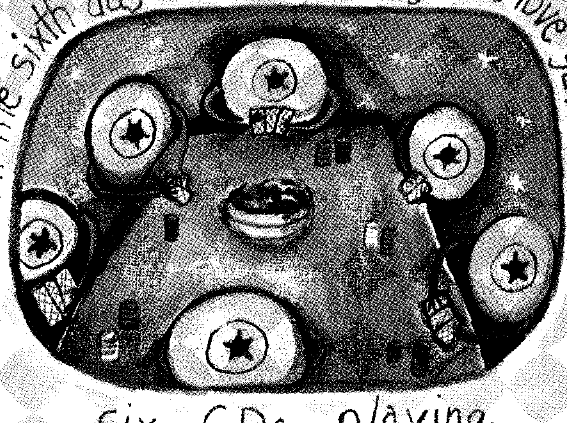
four Vibrabeds.

On the fifth day of Christmas my true love gave to me



five rowing machines.

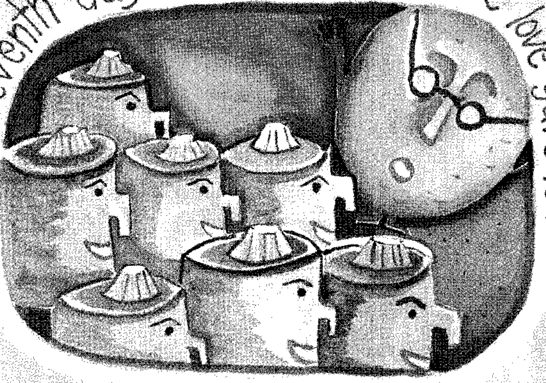
On the sixth day of Christmas my true love gave to me



six CDs playing.

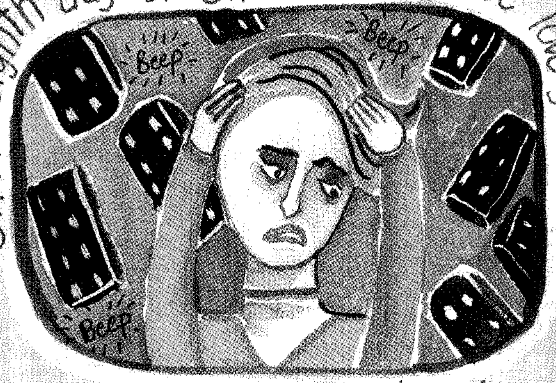
Days of Christmas

On the seventh day of Christmas my true love gave to me



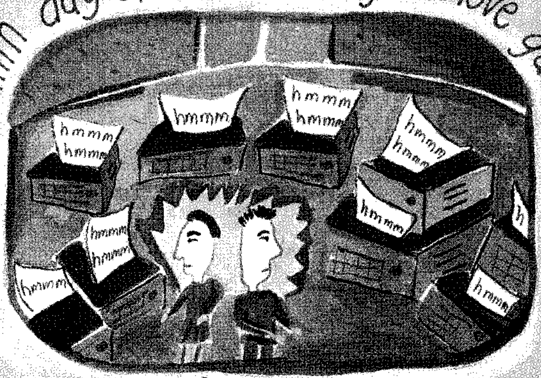
seven juicers juicing.

On the eighth day of Christmas my true love gave to me


Beep
Beep
Beep

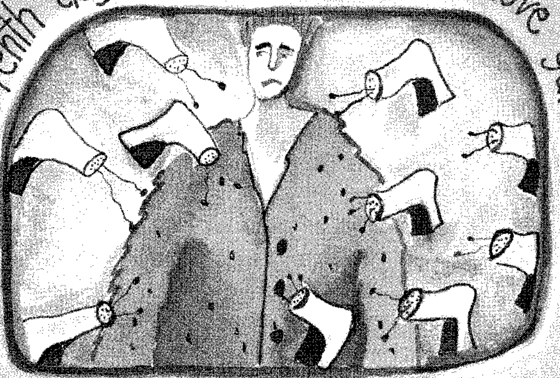
eight pagers beeping.

On the ninth day of Christmas my true love gave to me


hmmm
hmmm
hmmm
hmmm
hmmm
hmmm
hmmm
hmmm
hmmm
hmmm
hmmm

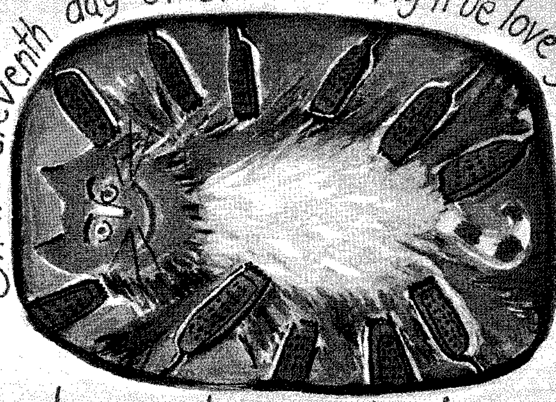
nine faxes humming.

On the tenth day of Christmas my true love gave to me



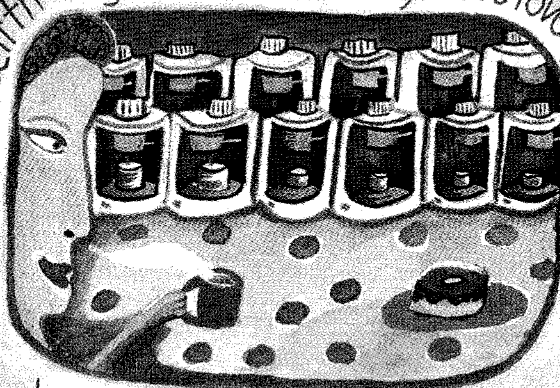
ten lint-pill removers removing.

On the eleventh day of Christmas my true love gave to me



eleven shavers shaving.

On the twelfth day of Christmas my true love gave to me



twelve cappuccino-makers brewing.

S. Skalisky

FICTION

TINY IN THE WILDERNESS

by Tom Drury

LOVE SO DEEP

Colette Bent had three children by three men. She'd been a redhead all her life, but when her third husband died, her hair came in snow white. She was over seventy years old now and lived in the town of Boris. Children there regarded her as a witch, an impression she encouraged by casting spells and walking in her garden at last light calling, "O Lucifer, appear to me now. O Lucifer . . ." She browsed *Consumer Reports* and *The New England Journal of Medicine*, and indulged a cough-medicine habit. Her tax bills were so delinquent that no one raised the issue anymore. The taxes had to be small in Boris, a bleak and eroded place where the town government did, in essence, nothing. But Colette Bent could not or would not pay.

She had two sons, Jerry Tate and Tiny Darling. Jerry swept the post office in Morrisville, and Tiny was a thief and part-time plumber. Colette and Tiny did not get along, and Tiny felt that she was in some way responsible for his many failures. He had inherited her red hair. Like a child's hat, it made him seem foolish and without substance as he approached middle age. Tiny's wife, Louise, had thrown him out, in the winter. Her car had broken down one night, and she had walked home a mile and a half in eight-degree weather. Tiny was assembling a shiny kerosene heater he had stolen from the Stone City Cashway. He neglected to notice the coldness of his wife's hands and feet. Louise turned on the broiler of the stove, flopped down, and peeled off her boots and socks. She opened the broiler and massaged her bare toes. She cried softly, in waves. It turned out she had suffered the first phase of frostbite, and this was the pain of reawakening tissue. Tiny offered her a box of Kleenex. That's when she said she wanted a separation, and it was not long before Tiny moved in with Jerry, who had a little gray house in Pringmar.

This worked out better than might have been expected. Jerry enjoyed his brother's company, his sense of humor, and his conviction that almost everyone and everything was out to get him and his kind, although when you looked around it was hard to identify anyone of Tiny's kind. He would say things like "It's the workingman who gets a ball-peen hammer between the eyes every morning of his life," but he himself did lawful work only once in a great while—if a neighbor's plumbing had gone bad, or if a raccoon had got into an attic. Louise divorced him in the spring. Tiny survived, relying on the bottle, and one night wandered into Francine Minor's house and fell asleep on her kitchen counter, a loaf of bread for his pillow. It wasn't until Louise moved in with Sheriff Dan Norman that Tiny felt he must head west. Louise and the Sheriff lived in Grafton, eleven miles from Pringmar, and the orbits of the two towns did not much overlap. But nothing Jerry said could change Tiny's mind. "Stealing is like being a chef," said Tiny. "You can find work anywhere."

He left in November, when Pringmar was besieged by rain and wind. Tiny sat in his car. Yellow box-elder leaves blanketed the windshield. Jerry came out with a broom. Not quite a year had passed since Jerry hurt himself in a snowmobile accident. He still wore the neck brace, although it was no longer doing any medical good. Jerry liked resting his chin, holding his head up without stress. The brace was by this time not pretty, but Jerry had sewn a washable cover, maroon with navy diamonds. It made him look dashing.

"I still say this is wrong," said Jerry, sweeping leaves from the windshield. "You're letting the woman dictate to you. You should go around this town with your head held high."

"I am thirty-nine years old," said Tiny. "I've never seen the Grand Canyon. I've never seen the Four Faces."

"You've been to Vegas," said Jerry.

"I'm talking about wonders of nature," said Tiny.

Jerry pulled leaves from the broom straws. "Well, I don't think any of that stuff is in Colorado. The Grand Canyon I know for a fact isn't. And what about your indictment? Don't you have to be in court pretty soon?"

"What a shame. I'll miss it," said Tiny.

"You can't run away from your problems," said Jerry.

"Everybody says that. But assume the problems are here and I go somewhere else. All right, you with me? What have I just accomplished?"

Jerry drew his chin inside the brace. "They'll come looking for you," he said.

"Tell them I went to Owatonna. Tell them I went to Bettendorf," said Tiny.

"So, lie," said Jerry.

"If it's the Sheriff, tell him Louise likes her toast so light most people wouldn't consider it toast."

"Laugh, clown, laugh," said Jerry. "I know what's really in Colorado—June Montrose."

June had been Tiny's girlfriend a long time ago. She was Louise's older sister. Tiny had married Louise after June joined the Army and went to Germany. June no longer went by the name Montrose. She was married—to a millionaire, supposedly. "Maybe our paths will cross," said Tiny.

"That would be a pleasant social event," said Jerry.

"I'd better go," said Tiny.

Only one of Colette Bent's children had made good. Bebe, the youngest, was a graduate of a hotel-management school in St. Louis. She now lived in San Francisco, and came home very rarely.

Reading Tiny's indictment, you would think he had levelled the town of Grafton with his bare hands. The county attorney had inflated a minor event into six alarming counts. Tiny had taken a crowbar to a display at a high-school dance. That's all. The

Sheriff was a chaperon at the dance, and he and Tiny had wrestled, so people later interpreted this as a struggle over Louise. And that was part of it. But the dance was held in opposition to vandalism, so wasn't it also possible that Tiny was taking part in that theme? Assuming the role of a vandal? The public defender, Rhonda Sullivan, even considered a free-speech defense. But she dropped this and decided to argue that Tiny's childhood had been miserable. She pressed him for stories of meanness by his mother or father.

"What about this?" said Tiny. "My stepfather worked for Rugg Molasses, in Morrisville. This was when Rugg Molasses was big. The plant covered that whole lot to the south of where they are now. I think what's left is just research or whatever they do. But they used to actually make molasses. Well, they called my stepfather in and told him he was done. So he came home and went hunting. He always hunted on Saturdays, but after they let him go from Rugg Molasses he hunted practically every day. We lived in Boris, and he would walk down the railroad tracks at eight o'clock in the morning, smoking a cigarette and carrying the shotgun over his shoulder, and he'd come home when the sun went down. He was a good shot: rabbit, pheasant, squirrel, possum. So one afternoon that winter, I and my sister, Bebe, were sitting at the table in the kitchen when Daddy came in. He didn't have anything, and I asked him what happened, and he said, 'We've got visitors come to see us in the yard.' So we went outside. Now, we had two metal lawn chairs that never got put away, so they were more or less rusting there behind the garage. Well, what he had done was he had taken two squirrels and set them up in these chairs, and he had lit two cigarettes and put the cigarettes in the squirrels' mouths. 'Isn't that funny?' he said. 'Have you ever seen animals having a cigarette?' 'No, we haven't,' I said. Then he said, 'Now, here's me.' And he went up to these squirrels and he said, 'I stirred molasses eleven years for you people. Keep me on. I can learn a new job. Give me a chance. I'll change.' Bebe started crying, and Daddy went inside. I told Bebe this was a game he was playing. Being a child, she didn't understand."

Rhonda Sullivan thought this over. "I want to talk now about a plea bargain," she said. "What do I mean when I use this term 'plea bargain'? Think of a bargain in a store. It's similar but different."

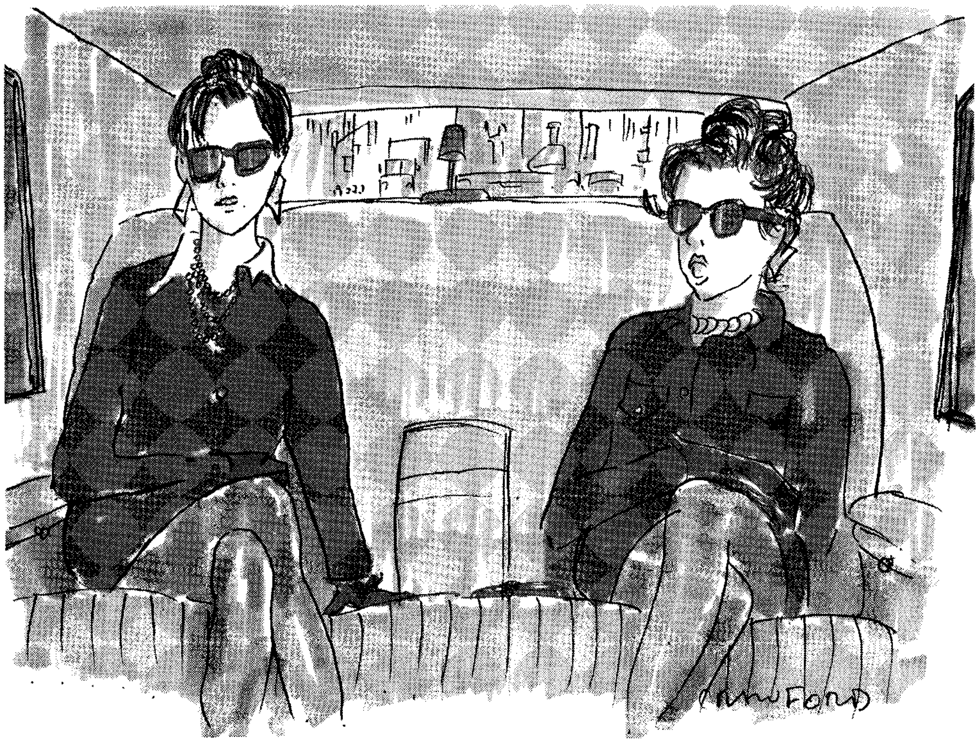
She probably would not care that Tiny had left town. She was the public defender for three counties—Grouse, Brier, and Worthy—and every time Tiny saw her, he had to refresh her memory of his wrecking the vandalism display, which only seemed to emphasize his guilt in a gloomy way. She also coached youth soccer, which Tiny knew because he had found the rules of soccer in her briefcase.

TINY drove south and west, across seven counties, and by dark he was on the interstate. His car was beat up but charming—a Pontiac Parisienne, metal-flake green, with mag wheels and lake pipes. The fan did not work, but on the highway it was not needed, because air rushed in at the car's every seam. Sometimes the windshield wipers worked on their own, as if detecting a fine mist beyond Tiny's perception. A crack like a leafless tree had climbed the left side of the windshield.

On the radio Tiny picked up a preacher with his own translation of the Bible. Father Zene Hebert was his name, and he had a deep voice that issued great rolls of static when he pronounced the sounds *ss* or *ch*. Father Hebert thought we were witnessing the final minutes of our pleasant day on earth. Tiny sat forward, kneading the wheel. This kind of stuff always excited him. Father Hebert said the Roman Empire represented suppertime, and the eternal clock was now poised on midnight.

TINY watched a televised hockey game in a dark tavern in Plain Park, Nebraska. He sat at the bar drinking beers and shots. The hockey was live and, with last call looming, seemed like a miracle of light and motion. There were three other people in the bar—a bartender, a waitress, and a small man reading a Robert Heinlein paperback. The waitress had completed her chores and sat at an empty table eating spaghetti. She had brown hair. If you saw her across a wide street or highway, you might mistake her for Louise.

"Would you like to take a ride and listen to my tapes?" said Tiny. "I have Bad Company, Paul Simon, Ten Years



"Want to skip lunch and cruise Canal for a pair of piano movers?"

After, and a lot more under the seat."

She displayed the back of her hand. "See the pearl?" she said. "That means engaged to be engaged. It's funny you should mention Paul Simon. My boyfriend is Ron Schultz, of the band Vodka River. They play all around here, and one of their songs is 'The Boxer.' "

"I should know that, but I don't," said Tiny.

"Lie-la-lie?" said the woman.

"Oh, sure," said Tiny. He took out a small black comb and ran it through his hair. His free hand followed, smoothing. "I like a woman of your size," he said.

"That's too bad, because, as I say, I'm pearled," said the waitress. "But it is flattering, in an odd way, and if you want I can give you free passes to see Vodka River tomorrow night at Frosty's. You're welcome to bring a friend."

"I'm only here tonight," said Tiny.

"That's too bad, because Vodka River was named one of the top-ten bar bands in Nebraska. You could go to Frosty's now, but I'm afraid their set is probably winding down. Ron is the drummer. He sings lead on 'Please Come To Boston' and 'I Shot the Sheriff.' Now, I'm sorry, but I have to go back to work. Being pearled is not the same as being engaged, but I'm not going to threaten what I have with Ron. You can have my garlic bread if you want."

"Thanks," said Tiny.

The lights came up. The small man had moved to the stool next to Tiny. He was pale and straw-haired, and wore a souvenir turtleneck sweater from Storybook Gardens in Wisconsin. His name was Mike. He was the distributor in Plain Park for a self-help program called Lunarhythm. Tiny wondered if Mike approached every stranger or just those who seemed to need self-help.

"I'll start a sentence and you finish it," said Mike. " 'I don't mean to complain, but—' "

"I get headaches sometimes."

"Good. 'If there was one thing I could change about myself—' "

"I would go ahead and do it."

" 'I wish I were an eagle, with—' "

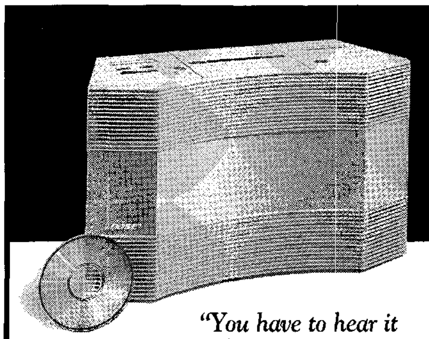
"I don't get that one."

"There is no right or wrong answer. 'I wish I were an eagle, with—' "

"Deadly claws?"

" 'I don't consider myself a loser, and yet—' "

"I have lost things."



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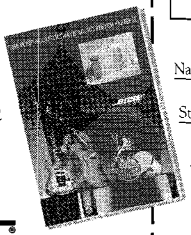

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"Good," said Mike. "Your answers are provocative and original. Clearly you would benefit from the Lunarhythm Plan. I mean, everyone does, but you would especially. This is a program of self-hypnosis administered according to the thirteen-month calendar of the ancient Sumerians. Why thirteen months? A fair question."

The waitress zipped a black-and-red letter jacket ("Plain Park Trojans"). "Give it up, Mike," she said. "Did you tell him it costs six hundred dollars? It does—it costs six hundred dollars for some pathetic index cards."

"That's your opinion, Brenda," said Mike.

"Whoa," said Tiny. "I'm not laying out money."

Mike rested his forehead on his hand. "Oh, there's a payment plan," he said wearily. "But thank you, Brenda. Thank you for destroying my presentation. I don't know what I did to deserve you for a sister. It must have been really bad."

"Well, the whole thing is stupid," said Brenda. She lit a cigarette and gave Mike one. "Those Lunarhythm people don't care about you, Mike. You're simply a pawn in their game. You've got to get a job. I told you that, Mama told you that, Daddy told you that. We've all told you until we're blue in the face."

Tiny called Louise on a phone in the hall. There was no answer, so he tried the Sheriff's place. Dan Norman accepted the charges.

"Put Louise on."

"Louise is asleep," said Dan Norman. "You'd better call back at a reasonable hour. And I'll tell you something else you'd better— Hold on. Here she is."

"Yeah? What, Tiny?"

"Put Louise on the line."

"This is Louise."

"Louise?"

"Yeah?"

"Don't forget the good side."

"I won't. Goodbye."

"I just wanted to say that. Don't ever forget the good side."

"I'll try not. Goodbye, now."

"Remember going across Lake Margo in that paddleboat? We had a hell of a good time. Remember how you thought we were going over the dam? You have to admit that you laughed when we were at Lake Margo."

"I may have, Tiny. I don't remember

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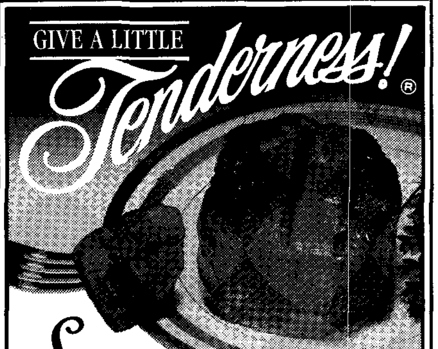

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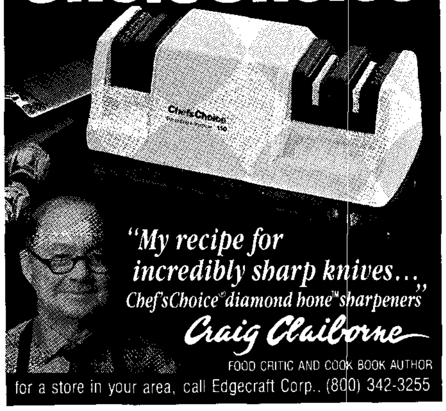

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every moment in my life and whether I laughed or not. If you say I did, it's possible."

"Then one of the pedals broke. Remember how the pedal broke?"

"Tiny, I have to get up in the morning."

"Well, I'm going to see June."

"Why? God damn it, Tiny."

"I'm already in Nebraska."

"Don't go to June's."

"By the way, could you give me their phone number? I seem to have misplaced it."

"You'll make a fool of yourself."

"Then at least you would be happy."

"I'm hanging up now."

"What's it like, fucking a robot? Does he take much oil?"

But she had hung up.

The parking lot was as bright as any day. A man with a transistor radio sat in the back of a van with the doors open. "I'd offer you some coffee for the road, but what I have is better than coffee," he said. "It's like a hundred cups of coffee, or a thousand."

Tiny bought some speed and glided the Parisienne back onto the highway. His anger left him, replaced by an expanding, chemical calmness. Seeing in the rearview mirror eighteen or twenty trucks bearing down on him, for instance, he showed no concern but only said, "Here come the semis."

The trucks passed the Parisienne like great ships on water. Many truckers who drive Interstate 80 take pride in their running lights. Strings of yellow and white scored the trailers as if square dances were taking place inside. And the cabs resembled ticket booths, strung with orange beads. Even some mud flaps were electric. Once, on a slight grade, the highway widened to add a slow lane, and trucks appeared on all sides of Tiny, and he seemed to be travelling through a canyon of light. This did not last. The lights faded and disappeared, like a blinking code, and Tiny drove alone. Someone on the radio said that Father Zene Hebert was a fraud. Hebert was not ordained, he wouldn't know a Biblical scroll if it hit him on the head, his real name was Herbert Bland or Herbert Grand, he was under indictment in Florida. A lamp by a bridge flared and burned out as Tiny passed. This kind of thing had been happening for years, and Tiny wondered if something in his body chemistry was putting out the lights.

HIS car broke down the next morning. It was fortunate in a way, because Tiny was suffering from road rapture. For miles, the things beyond his windshield—cars, bridges, culverts, farms, fences, mile markers—had been fusing into an image or pattern that resembled a photograph of a face. The stillness scared him. It meant his eyes were no longer seeing the movement of objects. It meant he was asleep.

He tried everything. He slapped himself. He rolled down the window. He left the interstate, hoping that ditches, crossings, and two-way traffic would make him alert. But the highway he took was empty; the face returned. He tried to sing with the radio but could not remember the words. Then the radio died. Tiny turned on the overhead light, and the car went into a stall. The problem was electrical.

Soon the Parisienne rolled to a stop, its alternator belt broken and gone. Tiny pulled the battery and began to walk. When a car came by, which was not often, he would turn and put out his thumb. He carried the battery under his arm and was reminded of happy times walking to school with a lunchbox, or taking the lunchboxes of other children.

He looked at cattle, and they looked back. He mused about the possibility of retrieving a Camaro mounted on a pole to advertise a dealership in a place called Euclid. Nebraska seemed flat and intimate. He found one battered white ballet slipper on the shoulder and turned it over and over in his hands. Eventually an old pickup stopped. It was red, with a camper top and decals on the back from the Everglades, the Keys, the Falls, and the Dells.

The driver of the truck was a sunburned, overweight woman named Marie Person. She was in her sixties and drove with a forward tilt, forearms curved to the wheel, shoulders gently rolling. Marie was one of those eccentrics who roam the lonely highways of monotonous states and almost seem to have been hired by the tourism department to enliven the traveller's experience. These people have certain things in common. Often they hold a patent, or have applied for one but are being blocked by lawyers, or have some other reason to correspond frequently with Washington, D.C. Sometimes the stamped and addressed letters ride beside them, fanned out on the car seat, which is usually a bench and not a bucket. They travel at midday or late at night. They cross desolate stretches for vague and shifting reasons that often have to do with animals. They need a vaccine for Skip the pony or special food for Rufus the cat, to get his urine flowing again; they are going to look at a calf in Elko named Dream Weaver or Son of Helen's Song. They know everyone in the low-roofed diners along the way, but no one seems to know them. Their surnames are not ones you have heard before.

Tiny felt comfortable with Marie Person. There was a welcoming roundness to her. Her eyes were very round. Grapes rolled on the floor of her truck. Her story was colorful but did not require much concentration. She had started out as a midwife in the Northwest Territories and had learned to fly. *Look* magazine sent a man to do a story on her, but he broke his leg on the ice and went back, and though she called a number of times, no one else came. Her husband, who'd taught her to fly, crashed his plane and died. Or maybe it was the man from *Look* magazine who died in the plane crash. Tiny wasn't sure. Anyway, Marie moved down here and had eleven children with a lawyer named Kenneth Strong. She lowered both visors to show the school pictures of her children. She gave their names but seemed to repeat herself. The pictures were old, the colors no longer right.

"Do you have any children, sir?" she said.

Tiny shook his head. "We went to the doctor a couple years back. My sperm count evidently isn't up to par."

"You have to keep trying," said Marie. "What will you build your life around?"

"It's a moot point," said Tiny. "We're divorced."

"A lot of people are," said Marie. She patted his hand three times.

"The county sheriff is at fault," said Tiny.

"In what sense?" said Marie.

"In the sense of: they live together," said Tiny.

"Ooh, I bet that stings," said Marie.

"I can tell you exactly when it fell

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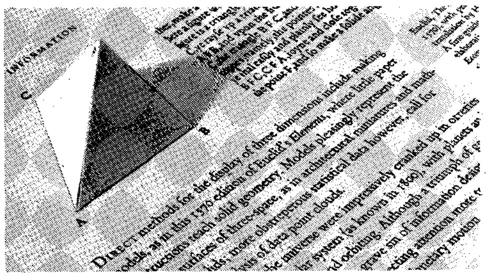

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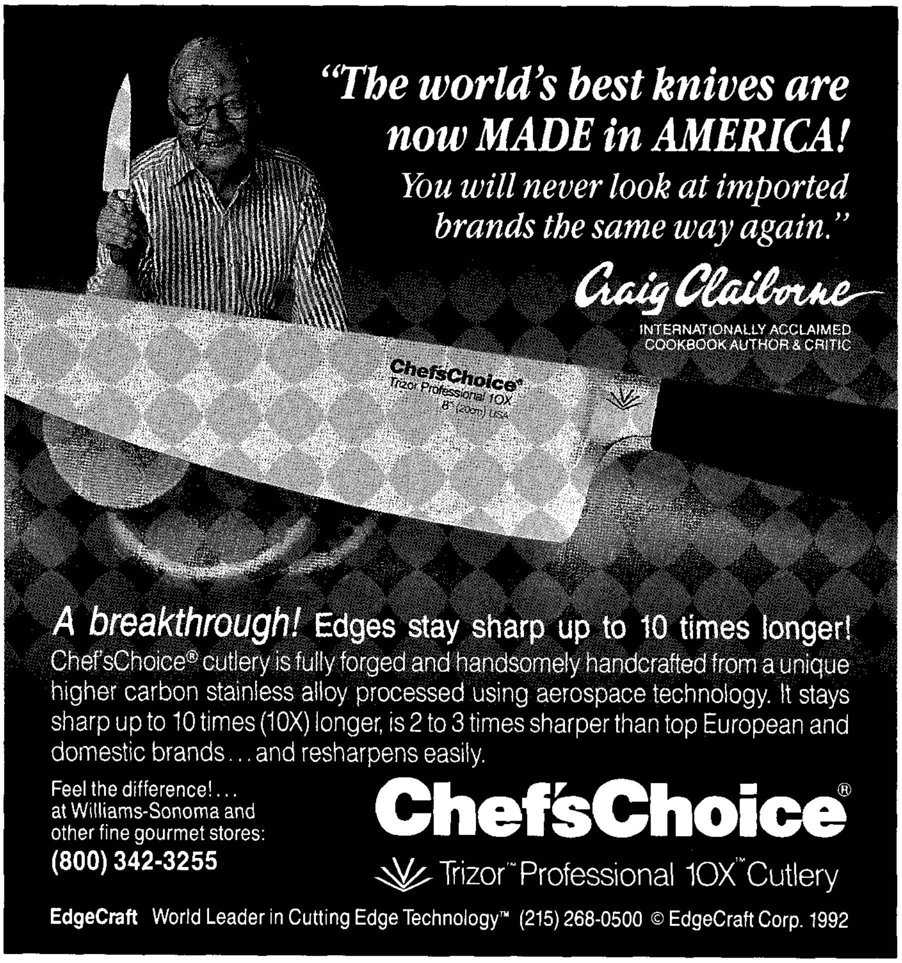

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apart," said Tiny. "One day I mentioned that nine out of ten men become police because they're afraid they can't satisfy a woman in the bed. And you know what she said? 'Where'd you hear that?' Oh, she was lost to me. You could see it coming a mile away. So I went out and got half in the bag, and when I came home she was asleep. 'Wake up,' I said. 'I might be half in the bag, but we have to talk.' So I gave a pull on the bedspread, and evidently I was kind of anxious, because she fell out of bed. That's the one regret I have."

"No lady likes a violent man," said Marie.

She bought Tiny lunch at the Stuckey's outside Lesoka, Colorado. She handed him a napkin and said, "Here's your napkin." Afterward she brought out a pack of Winstons.

"You want a child, here's what you do," she said. "Dig two sweet potatoes at midnight, during a quarter moon. Then go to a Catholic church and sprinkle them down with holy water. Put them somewhere with water and lots of sunlight, and let them sprout. At the next quarter moon you take them back where you dug them, and put them in the ground along with the name of the baby you want to have."

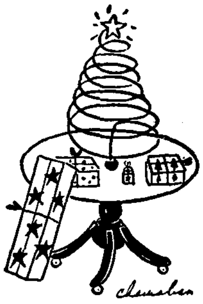
"Sounds kind of farfetched," said Tiny.

Marie shrugged. "Yeah, it is kind of stupid. I'm going to the ladies' room."

Tiny finished his meal and had a cigarette. Then he had another cigarette. He savored the smoke, for there was no hurry. Marie was gone. He wished that he had not left his battery in her truck.

TINY walked on into Lesoka, which rhymes with "Jessica," and took a room in a threadbare hotel near the railroad tracks. There was a candy machine in the lobby, featuring dusty and discontinued brands of licorice. Tiny lay down on a narrow bed with a thin white bedspread. He could not sleep. A train went by. Tiny counted the silhouettes of cats on Chessie boxcars. He turned the dial of the radio until he found his friend Father Zene Hebert. The father was explaining that people will be allowed to bring clothing to Heaven. "The verse should read, 'In my Father's house are many mansions, each with a cabinet for thy garments.' " Tiny shut off the radio. He took a bath and went down to the street.

That evening he visited all the bars on Railroad Street in Lesoka—the Alley, the Lion's Tooth, the Golden Spike, Kato's Korner. If you've been there, you know. He drank shots of Scotch whiskey until his eyes glowed, until his knees buckled, until his rejected life passed scene by scene before his eyes. He was lost as lost can be, pissing in doorways and on the polished wheels of Silverado pickups. He got the impression that no one in Lesoka danced, so he hauled likely couples before jukeboxes and forcibly manipulated their arms and legs to the songs of Suzanne Vega, Sly and the Family Stone, Loggins and Messina. His mighty finger crushed the buttons of his selections. He sprained the arm of a man named Jim. In turn, he was thrown into the alley behind the Alley.



There he talked to two criminals, or two kids claiming to be criminals, one car thief and one arsonist. Tiny told them about June and about Louise. The car thief thought he should just appear at June's and take his chances. He said June and her husband would be open to unexpected visitors because Colorado is an informal place where people like to party. The arsonist shook his head and said he would play it safe and call ahead. This made sense to Tiny, but he was too plastered. The operator could not understand him, and said, in a musical and sympathetic voice, "Call it a night, sweetie. Go home."

He walked the railroad tracks back to the hotel. Teen-agers huddled around a burning barrel near an underpass. They looked at him with wonder. The situation seemed to require some transaction, some gesture. In his coat pocket, Tiny found a piece of wood. He went to the barrel and dropped the wood on the flames. "Thanks, brother," said the teen-agers. Tiny nodded solemnly, but something bothered him about the stick he had contributed to the fire. He did not realize until he was on the third floor of the hotel that it had been attached to his room key. He forced the door, fell face down on the bed, and said, "Thank you, God, for love

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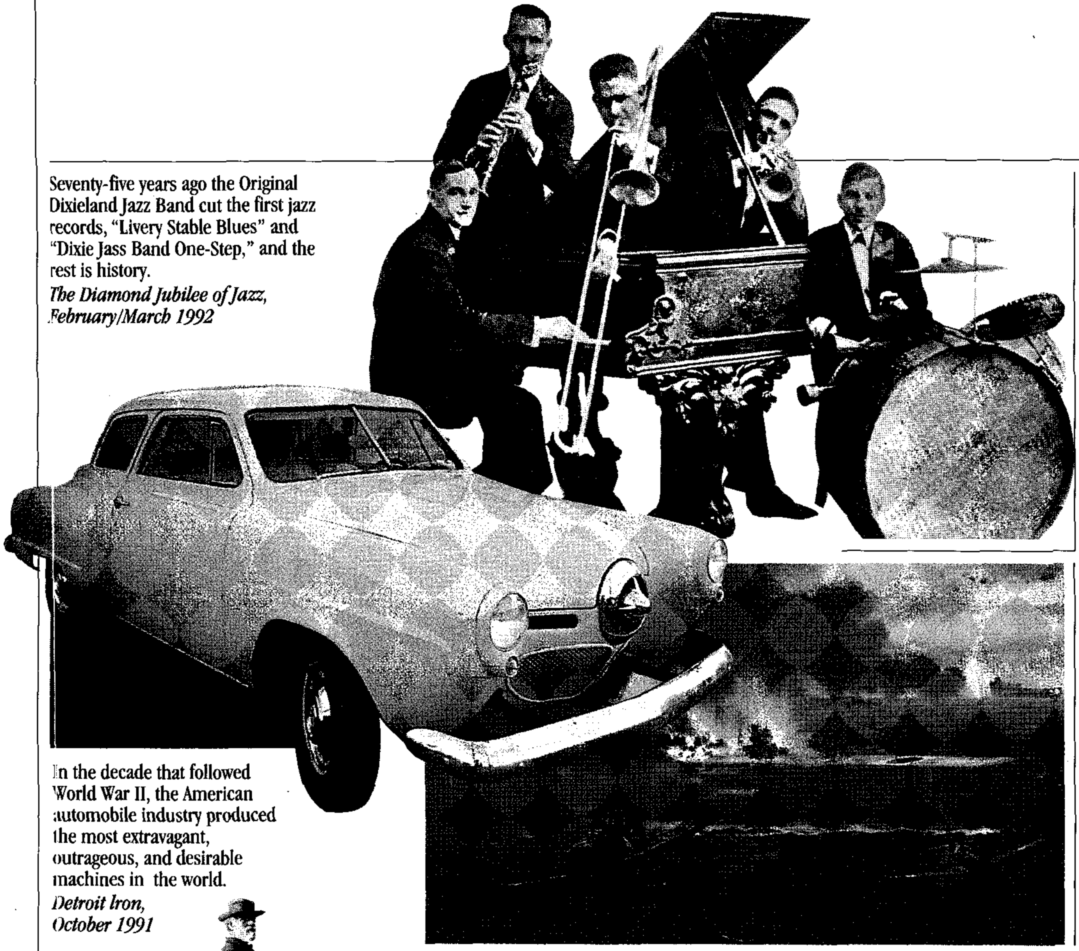

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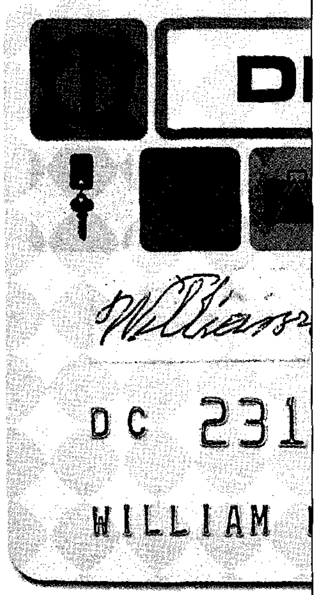

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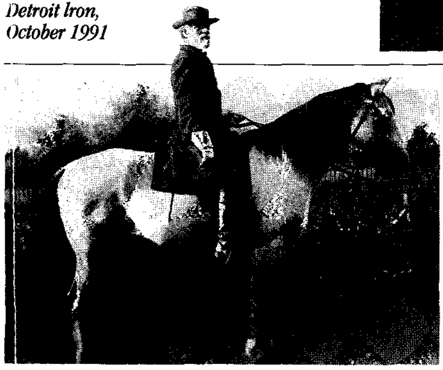

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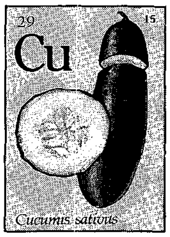

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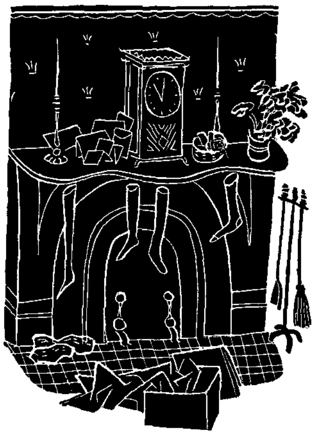
so deep; look out for me while I'm asleep." And then he slept.

WILD VILLAGE

TINY found work at a lumberyard in Lesoka. He rescued his car from the empty highway. The police had put an orange sticker on the side mirror: "Give Generously to the Policemen's Benevolent Association." All winter he plowed snow from the blacktop of the lumberyard with a Case tractor. He was thankful every day it snowed.

In the spring he began dating a woman named Kathy Streeter from the Farmers Business Bank. She had crayon drawings on her bedroom wall. These had been done by her nephew, who was four or five. The last night Tiny stayed at her apartment, he got up early, stole the drawings, and left quietly.

Tiny drove across the state to the town of August. This seemed like a proper Western place. The bar was called a saloon, men wore cowboy hats, women wore long skirts with leather fringes down the seams. Tiny found June and Dave Green's address in the phone book. They had a big house in a development called Sangria Shores—no water in sight, but maybe that would come later. All the houses in Sangria Shores balanced on gentle hills. The grass was perfect and the sunshine evenly distributed. The Greens' place looked like two or three ranch houses joined and painted rust and blue. A white Mercedes-Benz sat in the driveway. Someone had written "This Is Indian Land" in green along the fenders and driver's door. The driveway curved broadly, with black asphalt and yellow lines. Just as Tiny angled his car between the lines, the mirror that the orange sticker had been on fell off.



He stepped out of the car and picked up the mirror. June opened the front door. She was tall, with dark curls, and wore a long green dress. "I've been expecting you since last fall," she said.

"Hi, June."

"Louise warned me."

"What do you hear from her?"

"She got married last month, Tiny. She married Dan Norman at Christ Reformed Church."

Tiny polished the mirror with his sleeve. "I know it's pretty serious."

"It's not 'pretty serious.' They're married."

"Did you go to the wedding?"

"We were in Mexico."

"How was that, June?"

"Very different."

"I know I don't own her."

"You got that right," said June.

Tiny walked up to the steps. "I came all this way."

She took the mirror and turned it toward him. "I think I've found the problem," she said.

Then Dave Green came to the door. He wore jeans, a turquoise sweatshirt, and glasses with round black frames. He was in shape. "You must be Tiny," he said.

They went into the house to have coffee in the Florida room. The Greens had a grand piano, a huge television, and bright, messy paintings on the wall. They had an ice dispenser on the door of their refrigerator. Everything was polished, and Tiny saw his reflection all through the house. In the Florida room waxy plants and cane furniture stood beneath a slowly turning fan. The coffee was Dave's idea. June leaned reluctantly against the doorway.

"Honey, sit with us," said Dave. Orange fish swam in a rich green aquarium behind his head.

"I've got to go downtown," said June.

"Sit," said Dave. "Help yourself to a cruller, Tiny. You must be hungry from your journey. Come on, June. We'll get our bearings, and then we'll go from there."

"What happened to your car?" said Tiny.

"The Indians around here are pretty unhappy with me," said Dave.

June sat. She pulled pastry apart. "I have to go to the pet store, and the clothes store, and the pharmacy, and the bank."

"See, I work with land," said Dave. "It was my dad's business, and now I have it. June and I met in Germany. I was studying overseas."

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Tiny was looking from June to Dave and back. Probably they were unhappy with each other, and probably this unhappiness could be worked with. "Where?" he said.

"It's a theme park based on various conceptions of the Old West," said Dave. "It may or may not happen. Wild Village is a long way from becoming a reality."

"Frankly, I wish we had never heard of it," said June.

"Who painted your car?" said Tiny.

"Look, I don't blame the Bearpaw Nation," said Dave. "The white man did steal their land. Not me but my kind. Today we would go to the police. I don't know where to put their resentment. The irony is, Wild Village would pay a lot of Bearpaws a good wage."

June gathered crumbs on the end of her finger. "I can see where they wouldn't want to wear those uniforms."

"Hey, I didn't like those sketches any more than the next person," said Dave. "But the fact is they were preliminary sketches."

"What's wrong with the uniforms?" said Tiny.

"Well, they were cut pretty high on the thigh, for one thing," said Dave.

"I'm going," said June.

"Did you know that the gods sometimes appear in disguise to test our characters?" said Dave.

"You always say that," said June.

"I'm just a man," said Tiny.

"What do you want, Tiny?" said Dave.

"A job, Dave," said Tiny.

DAVE GREEN drove Tiny to a construction site in the mountains. There were pilings, concrete forms, an orange crane, an orange trailer. A crew was building a bridge across a stream. To the right was a dark-green wall of mountain, and to the left a lighter valley. The Mercedes rolled to a stop; Dave and Tiny got out. Noting the graffiti on Dave's car, a skinny construction worker pointed and laughed. His boots were blond and as big as loaves of bread. Dave beckoned to him, asked his name.

"Milt," he said.

"Milt, I want you to meet Tiny," said Dave. "He'll be taking your job. That's

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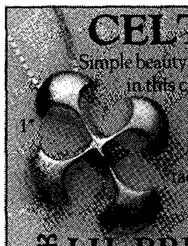

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right—you're done. Leave your tools and get on home."

"I don't believe it," said Milt.

"You believe it, Milton. It happened to the Indians. See how you like it."

"I have a family," said Milt.

The foreman came over. "What's the trouble, Dave?" he said.

"Hi, Cliff," said Dave. "I've fired Milt here. Tiny will be taking his place. Any problem with that?"

"What did Milt do?" said the foreman.

"He made fun of Indians," said Dave.

"I thought that was directed at your car," said the foreman.

"Either way, that makes him a smart-ass," said Dave.

"I have a family to feed," said Milt.

It was not clear who had the upper hand, Dave Green or the construction foreman. A swivel hook and some wire ties happened to be on a stack of rerod nearby, and Tiny picked them up and showed that he could use them. Both Milt and Tiny stayed on the job. The foreman, Cliff, seemed all right. Some construction bosses have a sadistic streak, and the whole site then gets that way. Cliff was a suntanned man, with a big stomach and gray hair. Later that first day, Tiny got to see how he handled a problem. The bridge had wood pilings that had been driven deep into the ground by a pile driver attached to the boom of a crane. Because of rocks and underground problems, it was rare for pilings to go in straight, and by the time you had six of them driven in a row they looked crooked as teeth. Then they had to be pulled one at a time into a more or less straight line, also by the crane, and secured that way long enough for concrete forms to be set up and a pier poured on top of them. This securing was done with a come-along run from a straightened piling to another piling across the creek. A come-along is a length of cable with hooks on either end and a ratchet and handle in the middle for taking up slack. When you crank up a come-along enough to hold a strained sixty-foot piling, the tension becomes considerable. So a cable broke, and the ratchet, weighing perhaps twenty pounds, ripped across the stream with a ghostly sigh and buried itself in sand. Death had found no one home, and everyone looked at the sky, as if expecting a fusillade of come-alongs. Cliff came out of the trailer. He pulled the ratchet from the creek bank and examined the piling, which had snapped back to its wayward position.

"Let's try that again," he said.

Tiny got a room in a big house at the base of Tiger Mountain. Tall, bleached grass grew all around. Many members of the crew lived there. The house was an example of the overbuilding that had been sponsored by the Bank of August. One night Tiny went over to Dave and June's for supper, and after the meal they turned down the lights and prepared for a séance. The founder of August had been murdered in 1894, leaving a fortune in silver that was never found.

The three Green children were at the movies, and June went around the house putting masking-tape crosses on the doors of their rooms. She wore a denim skirt and a big purple T-shirt. She explained how you could never expose children to the influence of the underworld and asked Tiny if he had any pictures of children or any children's belongings. He told her about the crayon drawings.

"Drive by a church tonight before going home," she said. "Go out to the stop sign, turn left, and take the first right past the Cantonese restaurant. That's Highland Episcopalian. I don't necessarily believe in all this, but I figure it can't hurt."

June brought out the Ouija board. Dave put on some spooky music, and they sat around a marble coffee table. Tiny upended the pointer when he put his fingers on it. He adopted a lighter touch. Asking a piece of heart-shaped plastic to tell you where a dead man had left his treasure seemed as foolish as anything Tiny had ever heard of. But staying close to the Greens was important. Eventually something would fall into his hands. The pointer began to move. Tiny thought June was pushing it, or Dave, or both of them. He stared at June's legs in a way that might pass for mystical concentration. He thought about the first time they made love, on a blanket beside a corncrib at night.

The Ouija session did not prove much. What was spelled out was "hajir." June and Dave decided that the "j" could be discarded. What they based this on, other than pure convenience, Tiny did not know. He was pleasantly surprised at the silliness of rich people, or these rich people, in their spare time.

"Hair," said Dave. "Cut hair. Who cuts hair?"

"A barber," said Tiny.

"A barber cuts hair," said Dave.

"Stop the presses," said June.

"Maybe the guy needed a haircut when he died," said Tiny.

"Maybe the silver was in a barbershop," said Dave.

"Maybe we didn't get a good connection," said June.

"We're going to have to spend some time with the plat maps," said Dave.

Then Dave led Tiny into the billiard room for some nine ball. The table spread before them like a brilliant green field. Dave did not seem to notice the wealth at his disposal—the rack of polished cues, the electronic powder dispenser, the dark abacus on the wall for keeping score. Absently he poured out the Johnnie Walker.

"You're a drinking machine," said Tiny. He had too much talcum on his hands, and left ghostly prints on the felt.

Tiny had velocity but not accuracy when it came to pool. Dave patiently won three games of nine ball. June was waiting for Tiny in the front hall. She walked him to his car. They heard a song begin on the piano. It sounded like things drifting away.

"They say you don't know Dave until you've heard him play," said June. They stood sheltered by the open door of the Parisienne. Tiny kissed her, and she pushed him away.

"I think not," she said.

The church June had directed him to was bunkerlike and modern, with a giant cross that seemed to challenge rather than court the stars. The door was locked, not securely. Tiny stood at the back pew and let his eyes absorb the darkness. The moon shone through tall, narrow windows and reflected off something on the floor at the head of the aisle. It was a vacuum cleaner. Tiny approached and turned it on with

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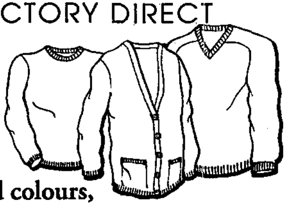

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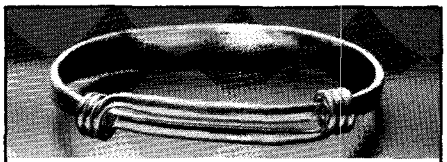

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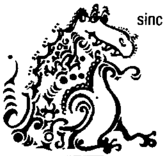

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his foot. He vacuumed the carpet. He thought about Louise. He had been dispirited and blasé when she engineered the divorce. But now the years they had been married seemed like the central age of his life. He stole a silver pitcher from a wooden rail.

THE next evening Tiny went walking on Tiger Mountain. Many trails branched from the big house. As he walked, a red-winged blackbird flew from tree to tree. This was a breed he knew from home. All else was different. The trees were taller and darker, the land jagged and in most places unfarmable. Tiny followed the blackbird along the side of the mountain, and eventually the trees opened, revealing a valley with a cluster of unpainted houses linked by gravel roads. The hillside had been timbered, and Tiny rested on a fallen tree. It was suppertime, with mist in the air over roofs of tin and shingle. An eighteen-wheeler rolled in, crowding the rutted road, and stopped beside one of the pine-board houses. The driver climbed down, went around to the other side of the cab, opened the door, and took a small, sleeping child in his arms. He carried the child into the house. Everything was quiet except for, occasionally, the bang of a garbage pail. Dogs roamed the village, searching for something they could not seem to remember. Tiny sat for another twenty minutes or so, held by the peacefulness of nightfall. Then he stood and saw a yellow leaflet half buried in pine needles. He picked it up, brushed it off, and read, "Bearpaw—Once there was a ghost dance which many believed would make Americans drown, which many believed would return Native land to Native people. The Sioux danced the ghost dance, even if it could not save them from being gunned down. Again we are threatened by money and those in its grasp. Will you act or will you sit at home? Call Carl at 555-3709." Tiny put the leaflet down and headed back to the big house. The trees rose up again, over his head.

MILT the construction worker put a water spider in Tiny's hard hat. This was a hard-shelled spider, found on the banks of the creek. The water spider did not bite but would crawl down your forehead or neck. Everyone laughed when Tiny discovered the joke. He ran at the nearest person, who said, "It was Milt!" Tiny put his hands on Milt's shoulders and shoved him down. Milt jumped up and delivered a wild punch. Tiny looked at Milt with deep appreciation. Fighting gave Tiny a feeling like being in his own yard. He knocked Milt's knees out from under him and hit him twice; that pretty much ended the fight. Cliff the foreman took Tiny into the trailer. Cliff had a desk on a raised platform. He rested his elbows on blueprints and looked at Tiny a long time.

"I don't see the enjoyment in your kind of life," he finally said.

"Milt put a bug in my hat," said Tiny.

"Jesus Christ, will you listen to yourself?" said Cliff. "You ain't a man, the way you talk. You're a little God-damned kid. Even your name. Tiny's no kind of name for a human being. Do you have a normal name?"

"Yeah, Charles," said Tiny.

"Then call yourself Charles. Or Chuck, Charlie, something. Tiny is a mouse's name."

"I guess that's my choice," said Tiny.

"Well, take your time making it," said Cliff. "Because I'm letting you go. It's not just this. It's a lot else. You've been stealing tools. This we know."

"No, I haven't," said Tiny.

"Charles, accord me the simple dignity of not lying to my face," said Cliff. "If you return them, I won't have you arrested. You can start by handing over that nail apron."

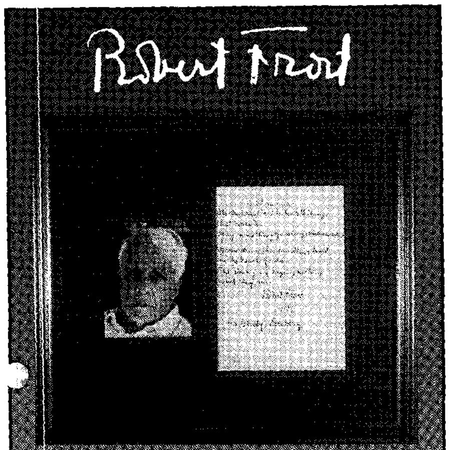
"Don't fire me," said Tiny. "I'm asking you."

Cliff removed his own hard hat and placed it on the desk. He stared at the hat as if it were a crystal ball. "Go home," he said. "Come back tomorrow morning with all the tools. And I mean I had better see every tool."

ON Saturday night, Dave Green and Tiny went digging for the silver. Dave said a barbershop had once occupied a vacant lot next to the Lilypond Nursing Home. Shovels clattered as they brought them up the basement stairs. June was in the kitchen, stirring up an Instant Breakfast.

"You're both too soused to find anything," she said.

"The nursing home will want our sil-



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ver if we don't keep it a secret," said Dave.

He and Tiny stepped onto the porch with the shovels and a goatskin flask. "What are the chances, really?" said Tiny.

"I just felt like getting out of the house," said Dave.

They drove to the lot, which was surrounded by a crooked wooden fence. Tiny and Dave went through a gate, and Dave took a certain number of paces from the northwest corner. They went to work. Moonlight made the scene look like an old negative.

Dave rested his shovel, pressed the sides of the flask, and drank. The night air seemed to have sobered him. He breathed deeply and passed the flask to Tiny, whose drunkenness had continued without pause.

"Why are you really here?" said Dave.

"I want Louise back."

"Louise is in the Midwest."

"I'll bet I'm in her mind, though."

"She's not your wife," said Dave. "The court has split you asunder. Louise is married to an influential man."

"I have goals."

"And if it's a high wage you're after, Aspen pays better than they pay here. Boulder pays better. Denver pays best of all. The situation here could improve if Wild Village goes through, but hell, that's years down the road. June and I have been putting our heads together and thinking maybe you should go over to Denver."

"I like working for Cliff," said Tiny.

"Well, see, that's the thing," said Dave. "I was talking to Cliff, and he really can't keep you on."

"June had a say in this?"

"We're the best friends you have."

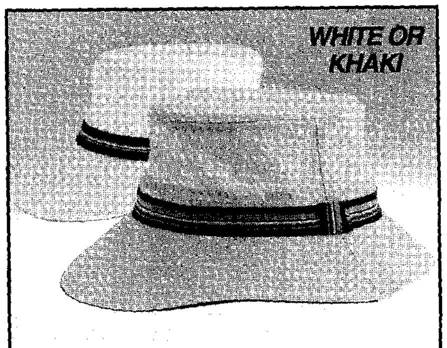
"What did she say?"

"Well, you don't necessarily want to know the exact words."

"What?"

Dave looked at the crooked fence. "She said she thought you should go to Denver," he said.

TINY ran a red light that night. He was crossing downtown August, and a truck plowed into the driver's side of the Parisienne. The truck was a delivery vehicle for Bazelon Lighting & Fixtures, in Colorado Springs. Tiny had a broken nose; the driver of the truck seemed to have something wrong with



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his arm. Police converged. An officer brought Tiny into a patrol car and handed him gauze for his nose. Banks of light danced on the dashboard.

"You are Charles Darling?" he said.

"That's right."

"Have you been drinking, Charles?"

"Well, I had some beer with supper."

"You had some beer with supper."

"Yes, a Grain Belt."

"And that's all you had to drink?"

"I had one Grain Belt."

"How fast would you say you were going upon entering the intersection?" said the policeman.

"I don't know."

"Make an estimate."

"I'm sure I drive around looking at my speedometer every minute," said Tiny.

"I see," said the policeman. "Where do you live?"

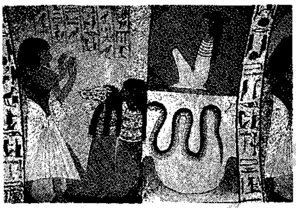
"At the foot of Tiger Mountain."

"Uh-huh. I have a sister lives over that way."

"It's a nice area," said Tiny.

As a result of his drunk-driving conviction, Tiny lost his license and was forced to go eleven times to group counselling in the basement of the courthouse in a town called Sedonia. The approach was psychological. A red banner with letters of yellow felt hung across the front of the room: "Liquor is bad." Tiny did not take any of it very seriously, and one time he raised his hand to ask whether pent-up rage might not come in handy in certain situations. It wasn't until the ninth meeting that something got through to Tiny. The group was taking turns behind the wheel of a video monitor that simulated the warped road perceptions of the drunk driver. You could turn it up—one drink, three drinks, eight drinks, legally dead. Every level ended in a crash, and then a little cartoon man would stagger across the screen with crosses where his eyes should be. When Tiny touched the steering wheel, the machine malfunctioned, delivering an electrical shock that knocked him unconscious.

He lay on his back on the floor, dreaming that he was on a lake. Ghosts moved swiftly about in small boats. They called his name: *Charles . . . Charles . . .* They all got around fine. Only Tiny drifted toward the waterfall. When he reached it, however, he found that he, too, was a ghost, able to keep going in the air. ♦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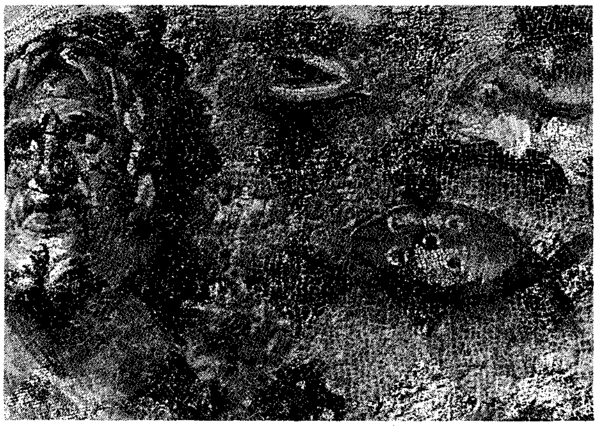
Greek National Tourist Office

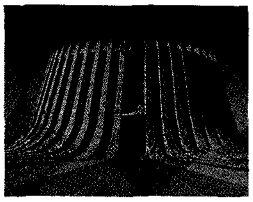
MEDITERRANEAN TREASURES

Ancient Civilizations, Modern Wonders

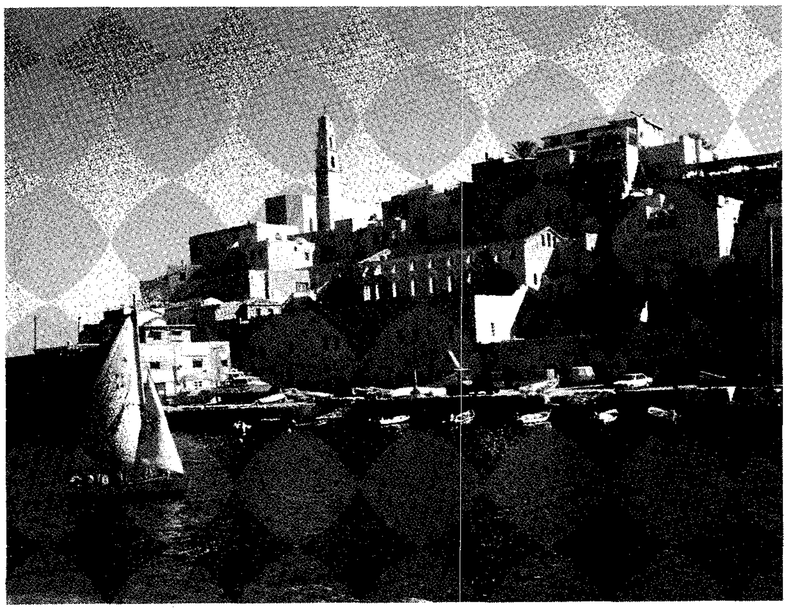
The eastern Mediterranean reads like a book of ancient history with four main chapters — Israel, Turkey, Greece, and Egypt — telling the story of the birth of western civilization. Now there are modern additions — like museums using the latest technology, concert halls, deluxe hotels, elegant restaurants, and comfortable transport — that, far from vying with the historic treasures, only make them easier to appreciate.


Turkish Culture and Information Office

Clockwise from right: Jerusalem's JFK Memorial; "The God Oceanus" at the Antakya Mosaic Museum, Turkey; wall paintings in Luxor, Egypt; Monemvasia, Greece.


Israel Government Tourist Office

In many ways the Israel Museum is the perfect metaphor for Israel — ancient artifacts enfolded in a modern shell. Sitting at the apex of three continents — Europe, Asia, and Africa — and at the center of the world's three largest monotheistic religions — Judaism, Christianity, and Islam — the country's historic legacy is staggeringly rich. Yet Israel, created in 1948, is also brand new.



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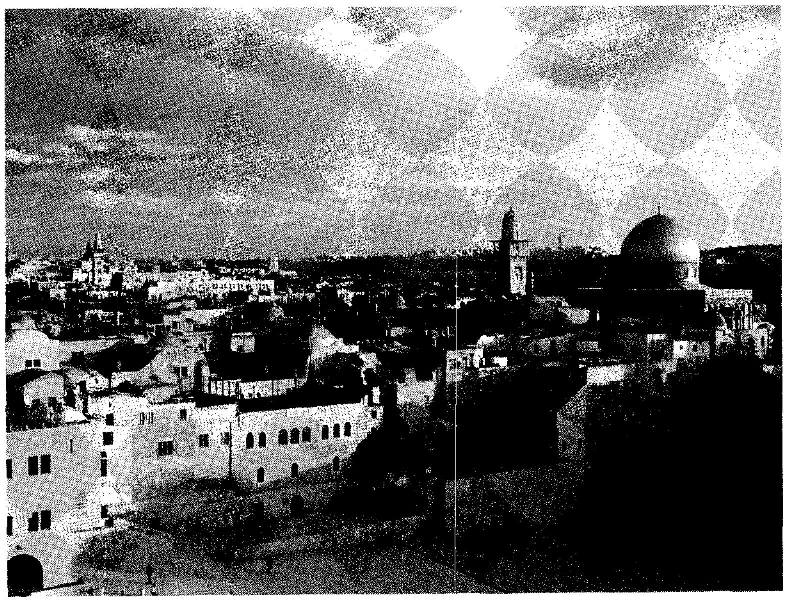

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Above: the port of Jaffa. Below: The Old City's Dome of the Rock.

These two complementary personalities are immediately apparent. Most visitors to the country fly in to Ben Gurion airport in Tel Aviv, Israel's capital, on the Mediterranean, and its modern face to the world. Bustling shopping streets, haute couture, and high-rises now stand on a site that was just a sand dune at the turn of the century. A visitor's next stop is usually Jerusalem, its Old City largely unaltered since it formed the tableau for the New Testament. The Old City is still redolent with that atmosphere and still harbors many of the key sites of Western culture like the Western Wall, Calvary, the Mount of Olives, and the Dome of the Rock.

As the visitor wanders through the Old City, encased within ancient walls, its labyrinth of alleys yields up its treasures. The Citadel Museum of the History of Jerusalem, housed in a two-thousand-year-old fortress, now illustrates the history of the city, giving perspective through films and exhibits. Visitors should stroll farther, through the ethnic quarters, with their colorful shops and restaurants clearly depicting the various cultures, past ancient gates, synagogues, and churches.

Outside the walls stands the sad and intensely memorable monument to the Jewish Holocaust, Yad Vashem, its halls almost weeping with the fears and tears of the death camps. The Israel Museum is the home of the Dead Sea Scrolls, perhaps the most significant archeological find of this century. And nearby is the latest cultural jewel, the Bible Lands Museum, focusing a non-denominational eye on the history of the Bible.

After touring Jerusalem, the rest of Israel, in all its ancient and modern diversity, presents many options. Heading south the visitor comes to the lowest point on earth, the Dead Sea, where the modern spa set comes to soak in health-affirming water twenty-five times more saline than ordinary seawater, and in skin-soothing mud. Nearby, the fortress of Masada, symbol and dramatic site of Jewish resistance, looks out from its lonely perch across an arid, moon-like landscape. Further south, lies another contrast — Eilat, Israel's Cote d'Azur equivalent, the swinging international sun spot on the tip of the Red Sea.

> ***"Israel is the land of the muses, perfection of beauty, where in every stone is a book, every rock a graven tablet."***
>
> ***-Micah J. Lebensohn***

Heading north along the Mediterranean coast, the visitor sees another of Israel's facets — seaside towns, full of modern facilities and accommodations with their ancient archeological sites restored. Roman structures are prominent in the ancient seaport of Caesarea with its aqueduct, two-thousand-year-old harbor, and superb amphitheater, the site of summer concerts. Haifa is Israel's third largest port, rimmed with a promenade and bursting with outdoor cafés, but was also the birthplace of Elijah and the start of the road to Mount Carmel where wandering Crusaders built a church and founded the Carmelite order. Finally the visitor comes to Akko, the old Crusader capital that challenges Old Jerusalem for antiquated charm.

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Greece

Mention Greece and historic images flood the mind. There is the family of gods and goddesses manipulating humanity from Mount Olympus and the clash of heroes and monsters, the grist of Greek myth. There's Plato and his school of sage philosophers laying the foundations of Western wisdom; the fatal beauty of Helen and the dramas of Aeschylus and Sophocles. And there are the modern attractions — classic sites, the legacies of this history, and the Aegean islands rimmed with turquoise.

Greek National Tourist Office

The Erechtheion in Athens.

Here the best starting point is the Acropolis, a high plateau crowned with the Parthenon. Around its base lies the Plaka quarter, a tangle of streets accented with boutiques and tavernas, and the Agora, the meeting place of ancient Athens. And nearby sits the Odeon of Herod Atticus, a restored amphitheater that now hosts many cultural events including the annual Athens International Festival. And all around sprawls the modern metropolis, chock full of contemporary attractions like the casino at Mont Parnes and the new concert hall, Megaron Mousikis.

After the Acropolis the next stop on the tour should surely be the National Archaeological Museum. Here visitors can gain their historical bearings and follow the course of Greece's illustrious evolution. Then, returning to the present, they can meander through the streets until they come to Syntagma (Constitution) Square where the traditionally clad Evzones guard the tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Dotted throughout the areas around the capital are a host of varied sites, many accessible on one- or two-day trips. Looking down on the Aegean from Cape Sounion, the Temple of Poseidon, graceful with its rows of Doric columns, stands in homage to the god of the sea. It's the sun god Apollo who receives the honors both at the temple in Corinth and at Delphi, where visitors can pose their questions to the omniscient, if ambiguous, oracle. Over in Epidaurus, past and present fuse in the summer festival at which classical drama is performed in the vast, 14,000-seat, 2,500-year-old, acoustically perfect amphitheater.

Turkey

Turkey, gateway between East and West, has played host to Romans, Byzantines, Crusaders, and Ottomans. Like its neighbor Greece, the country is blessed with coastlines (both Aegean and Mediterranean) of incredible beauty. Its coastal villages offer quaint local color and ambience, and balmy beaches; the country's coastal cities are rich with museums and shopping; in between and inland lie astounding historical treasures reflecting a rich and varied heritage.

Considering Istanbul's many hidden antiquities, it's not surprising the city should be dubbed the "attic of the East." The first-time visitor can only hope to absorb the atmosphere of the old district, Sultan Ahmet — the back streets, the coffee houses, the Galata Bridge at dusk — and should see at least a few of the grand, contemporary

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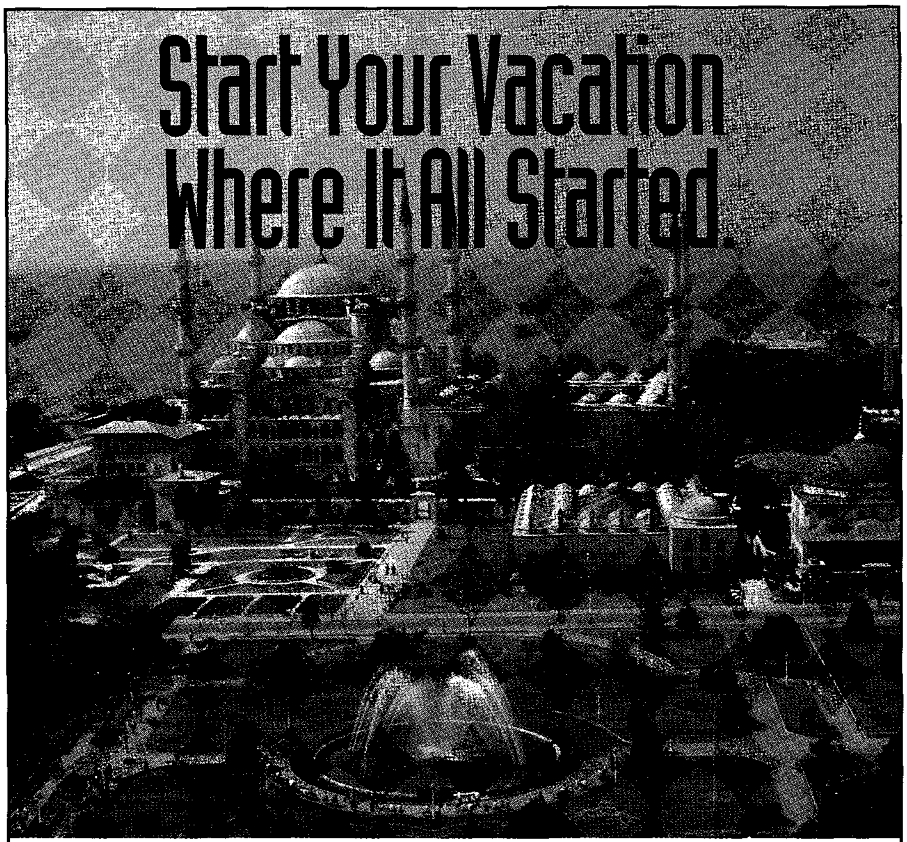
To the north lie the regions of Macedonia and Thessaly with two outstanding geological attractions. Meteora, in Thessaly, a vast rock formation rising sheer from a plane, was considered prime real estate by hermits in the ninth century. Five of their monasteries, perched high on the cliffs, are still in use. And fir tree-flanked Mount Olympus, on the border of Macedonia and Thessaly and home to the ancient gods, is now a hiking and recreational area. Those who'd enjoy treading in the footsteps of Alexander the Great should make stops in Pella, his birthplace and Macedonia's ancient capital, and Vergina, where the mighty conqueror's father, Philip II of Macedonia, was buried.

But no visit to Greece would be complete without sampling some of the islands that lie invitingly close to the major ports. Visitors on a tight schedule should take at least a day cruise from Piraeus (the port of Athens) around the Saronic Gulf islands of Egina, Poros, and Hydra. Those with the time to dally should first consider their travel choices: Mykonos, with its whitewashed sophistication, draws the chic, silk-shirt set; Santorini, built around the flooded crater of a volcano, has spectacular sunsets and beautiful black beaches; Rhodes has its antiquities and its medieval walled city; and Crete, the largest island has Knossos, where the Minoans established Europe's first civilization.

sites. The first of these is the Topkapi Palace. Visitors are awed by the displays of magnificence of the sultans and the mysteries of the Harem.

Then after a lunch of borek and kebab, the visitor should wend his way through the tunnels of the Covered Bazaar, tackling the ornate negotiations with the vendors. The next day it's time to rest in the spacious grandeur of the Blue Mosque and dive back through two thousand years of history at Ayasofya (St. Sofia). Foot weary and satisfied, the visitor should finally repair to a traditional Turkish bath for rejuvenation. Interwoven in this ancient tapestry, mean-



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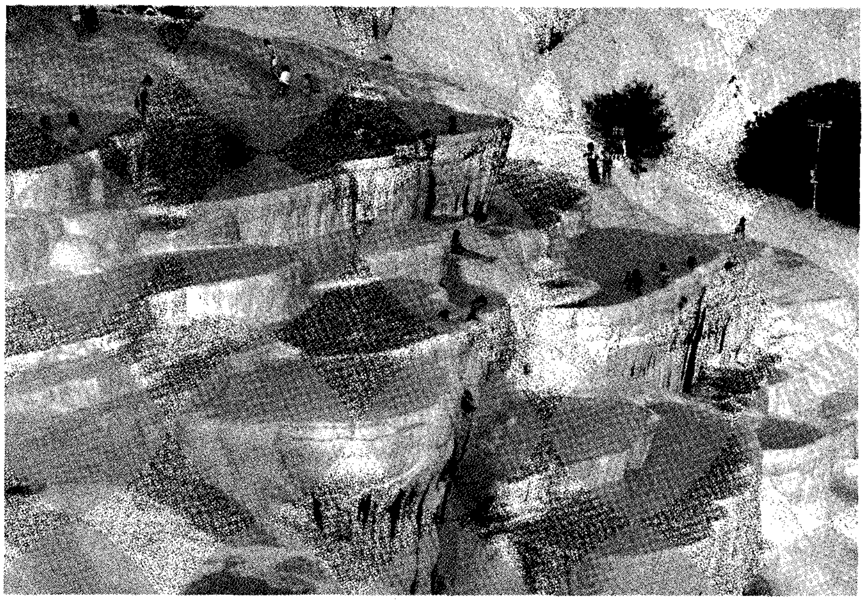


Turkey's Pumukkale is a wonderland of stalactites.

while, are Istanbul's modern threads — international hotels, elegant restaurants (with or without belly-dancing), and boat rides down the Bosphorus.

Travelling south down the Aegean coast, the visitor will find bright seaside towns like Izmir, Kusadasi, and Bodrum, where the international crowd of sun-seekers peppers the beaches and outdoor cafés. The journey links breathtaking historic sites, like the excavations at Troy, the ruins of Pergamum, and the reconstructed Roman city of Ephesus. Heading east, the route leads into the lively city of Antalya. Founded in the second century B.C., Antalya has a rich historical appeal while doubling as a modern resort and a perfect hub for surrounding tours.

Away from the coast, in the Anatolian heart of the country, lies a region of unique interest — Cappadocia. Now a national park, this is where zealots escaping religious scourges literally went to ground, carving out entire cities in the rock. Goreme and Urgup are the key centers of this region.

On the northern coast, bordering the Black Sea, visitors find fir tree-covered mountains, lush and relatively unvisited. Small seaside towns like Sile and Amasra blend natural beauty and historic interest with modern conveniences.

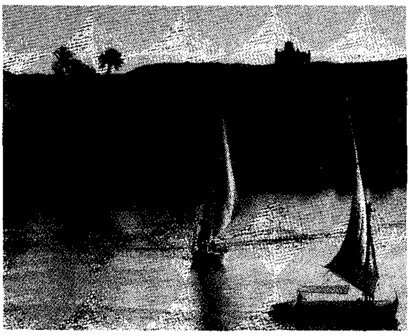
Egypt

Shaped by the glory of the Pharaohs, the impact of the Romans, and the influences of the African continent, Egypt is widely different from its eastern Mediterranean neighbors. Visitors come here to chase their images of pyramids and tombs shrouded in mystery, of sailing gently down the Nile in a felucca, of soaking up the sun and enjoying the modern comforts of Alexandria. These ancient/modern disparities exist in Egypt's three distinct regions, the Nile Valley, the Mediterranean coast, and the Red Sea coast.

The most important region in terms of culture is the Nile Valley, one of the most fertile areas on earth. Starting in Cairo, the visitor finds a huge modern city humming with life, yet enfolding gems that echo the country's ancient past. In the New City visitors should soak up the sunset from the top of the Cairo Tower. Don't miss the camel market that is held every Friday. The Egyptian Museum is a must, its rooms filled with the artifacts and treasures of the mighty Pharaohs; and visit the Coptic Museum with its quiet corridors of Coptic art. Before leaving Cairo, visit the world-famous site, the very essence of Egypt — the three pyramids guarded by their inscrutable Sphinx.

Travelling south down the Nile the visitor turns the pages of Egyptian history back five thousand years. The river flows through a succession of small towns with their imposing temples and local museums until it reaches the heart of antiquity, Luxor. Inside the town are two temples par excellence — Luxor and Karnak — supported by a forest of columns. Outside lies the Valley of the Kings, where sixty-four tombs sheltered Egyptian royalty including the youth Tutankhamen. One more day's travel south brings you to Aswan, the country's southern gateway.

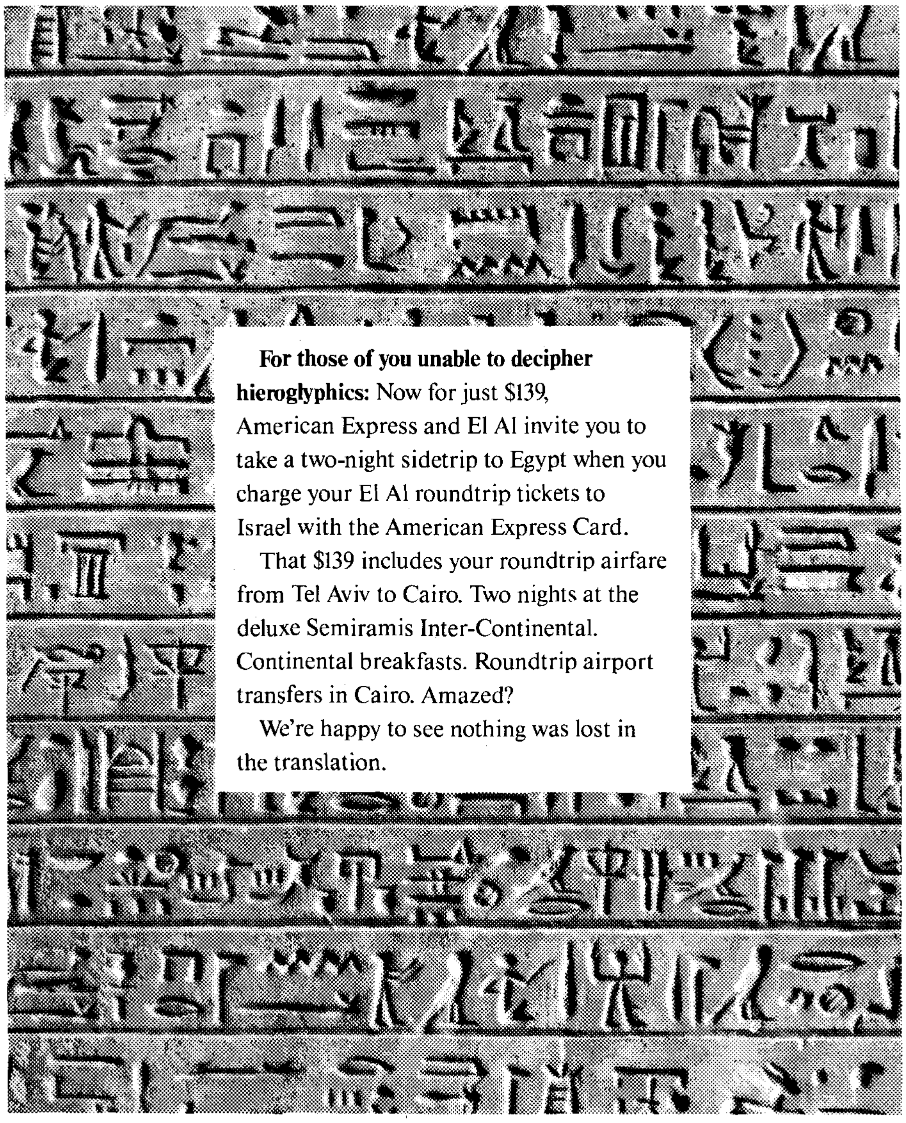
The Mediterranean coast region spreads out from Alexandria. Once an ancient pleasure spot (and home of Cleopatra) the town has transformed itself into a modern pleasure spot for the jet-set, sun-tan crowd who flock here for the beaches and the nightlife. Even here antiquity asserts itself in an amphitheater and a Greco-Roman Museum. To the west lies Marsa Matruuh, a resort town on a smaller scale, and El-Alamein, site of the crucial World War II battle and now the War Museum. Those who make the five-hour trip south through the sand to the Siwa Oasis will dip into the unchanged traditions of Siwan culture.


Trevor Wood/Tony Stone Worldwide

In Aswan, feluccas sail on the River Nile.

Over to the east lies another chapter on Egypt — the Red Sea coast. An area of stony desert fringed by coral reefs teeming with life, the Red Sea coast is a haven for history buffs and divers alike. For the former, the principal attraction is the seventh-century Byzantine monastery and fortress, St. Catherine's, near Mount Sinai, where Moses received the Ten Commandments. For the latter, resort towns like Sharm el-Sheikh and Dahab offer modern facilities and easy access to the psychedelic underwater wonders.

Andy Bill, a New York-based travel writer, specializes in special advertising sections.



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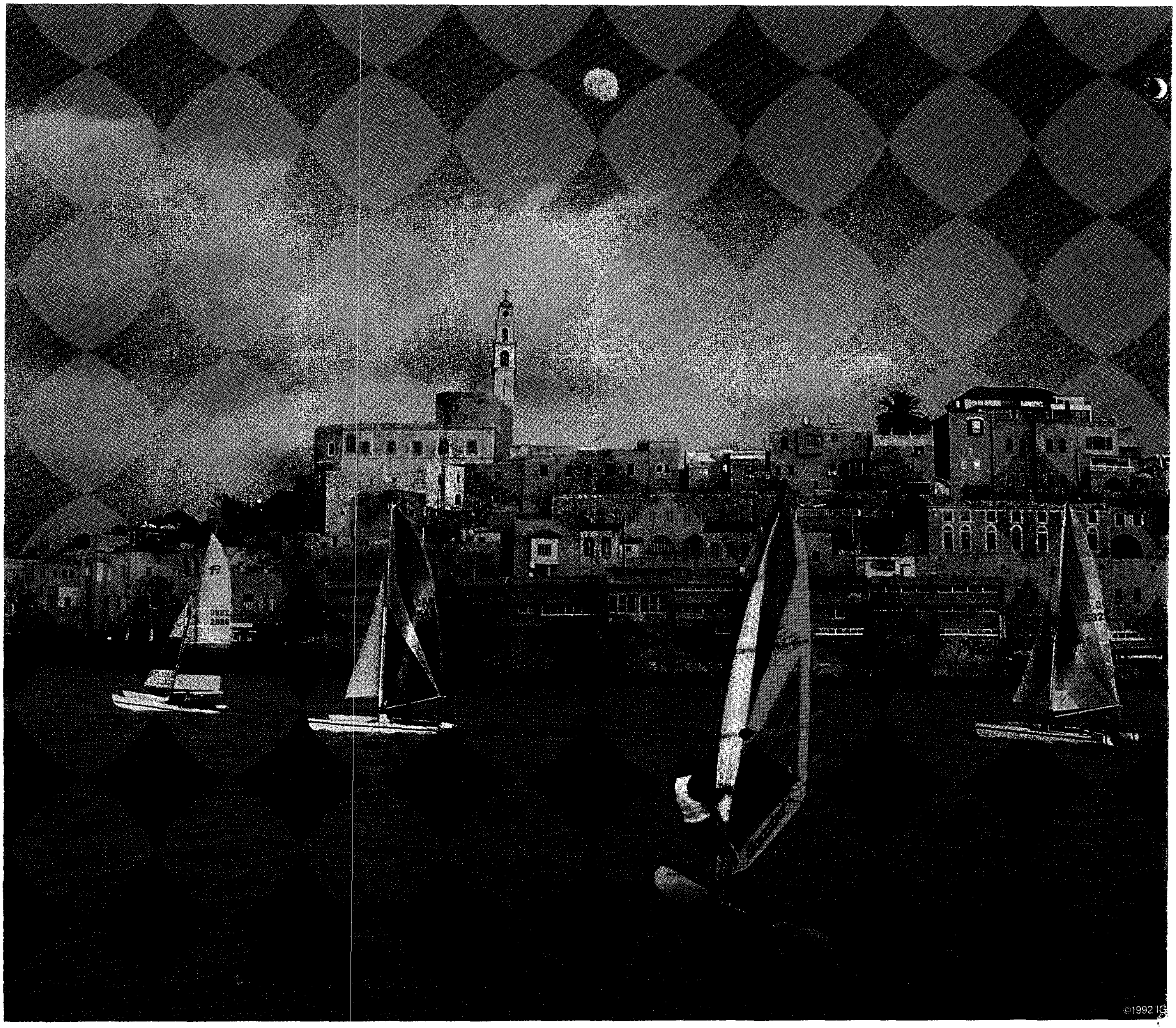

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THE CRITICS

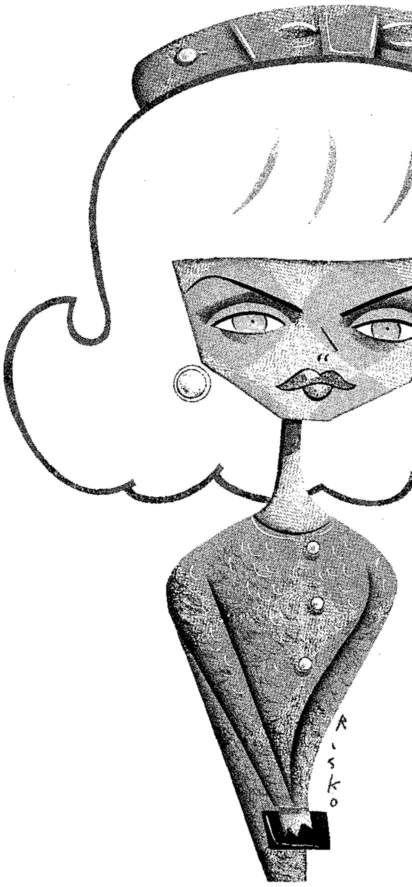
THE CURRENT CINEMA

NOT QUITE CAMELOT

by Terrence Rafferty

JONATHAN KAPLAN'S "Love Field" begins in Dallas on the day of John Kennedy's assassination and follows its heroine, a Kennedy-worshipping married woman named Lurene (Michelle Pfeiffer), as she sets off by bus on a journey from Dallas to Washington, where she hopes to attend the President's funeral. As she travels through the South, her grief over the killing is gradually displaced by more immediate and more personal concerns. She gets herself tangled up in the lives of a quiet young black man, Paul (Dennis Haysbert), and his eight-year-old daughter, Jonell (Stephanie McFadden), whom she has met on the bus; the script (by Don Roos) contrives to take them all off the bus and set them on the run, outlaw-style, in a stolen car. In the course of their flight—from the law, Lurene's husband, and evil-tempered rednecks—Lurene and Paul become lovers. On the face of it, this sounds like the sort of picture Roger Corman might have produced in the seventies, in which attractive fugitives streaked through hostile Southern landscapes; and with assassination and interracial romance, and a touch of "Thelma and Louise" outlaw feminism thrown in, "Love Field" has the makings of a pretty shameless exploitation picture. But Kaplan (who began his career directing drive-in specials like "White Line Fever" for Corman) and Roos aim for a muted, rather soothing tone; they seem determined to keep the fiery elements of the material burning slowly and evenly—to produce warmth rather than heat. When Paul steals the car, the audience naturally thinks, Here we go, the chase is on. But the vehicle is a sputtering heap; its top speed is maybe thirty-five, and it breaks down a lot. This car is somehow emblematic of the filmmakers' odd approach. "Love Field" is a chase picture that moves at the Sunday-drive pace of the stately sedan in "Driving Miss Daisy."

The movie's gentle, pleasant rhythm is probably, in part, an attempt to reflect the attitudes of the time and place in which the story is set. The filmmakers seem to have taken to heart the Supreme Court's famous desegregation formula: they proceed to the climax with all deliberate speed. Their patience produces a fair number of minor triumphs in the course of the picture—individual scenes that are subtle, sharply observed, and emotionally convincing—and Roos's script doesn't trivialize the interracial love story with the standard recognition-of-common-humanity pieties. Paul remains silent when Lurene chirps on about how much J.F.K. did for black people, and he brusquely rejects the suggestion that her unhappiness in her marriage equips her to understand his kind of alienation. "We are *not* the same," he insists. She's sympathetic and well-intentioned but sometimes (innocently) condescending, and she becomes flustered and defensive on those few occasions when Paul's bitter distrust of white people breaks through his polite façade. She keeps trying to do something for him and his daughter (as, she imagines, a Kennedy might), but her clumsy efforts don't do anyone a whole lot of good, and it's mostly Paul and Jonell who suffer the consequences of her blunders. In a sense, Lurene is a



Michelle Pfeiffer plays a Jackie wannabe in "Love Field," an outlaw romance set in the days following the Kennedy assassination.

muddleheaded liberal of the most dangerous sort—someone whose help can leave you worse off than you were before. But the movie acknowledges its heroine's limitations without beating up on her, and it doesn't satirize Paul as a deluded, foolishly deferential black victim, either. Kaplan and Roos sensibly avoid imposing historical hindsight on the material; "Love Field" never asks its main characters to be more enlightened than any two ordinary, decent-hearted people could be in the South in 1963.

The filmmakers' objectivity and their willingness to focus on the particular emotional texture of racial understanding (and misunderstanding) are real virtues. Yet the picture is disappointing. It feels, in the end, too modest, too tactful; in avoiding sensationalism, "Love Field" too often settles into a flat, lulling TV-movie tone. It never stalls completely, but it never quite takes off, either. The Kennedy-assassination motif seems intended to supply the grand metaphor that would open up the story's meanings, transform the movie's small-scale naturalism into something more like poetic realism. But it comes off as just a gimmicky, cornball notion: the huge trauma that makes an unexceptional middle-class woman—and, by extension, millions like her—want to rethink her life completely. For a lot of the picture, Lurene's obsession with the Kennedys (especially with Jackie) is played for comedy: to meet the Presidential plane as it lands at Dallas's Love Field, she dresses up in a chic pink suit and a perky little pillbox hat; she keeps a fat, obviously fussed-over scrapbook of First Family articles and photographs, which she pores over regularly; and she's a walking encyclopedia of Kennedy trivia, with which she bores her husband and other helpless listeners at every opportunity. But when the filmmakers try to encourage us to see Lurene's idolatry in a more serious light they're not persuasive. The heroine's identification with Jackie is, we're told, based largely on their both having suffered the loss of a child: Lurene had a miscarriage, and Jackie gave birth to a baby who lived less than a week. The connection is offensively facile.

With the big, overriding metaphor misfiring, "Love Field" just seems to laze along from moment to moment, jump-starting itself occasionally with a rigged crisis or a trace of sentimentality. (There

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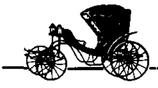

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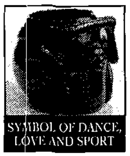

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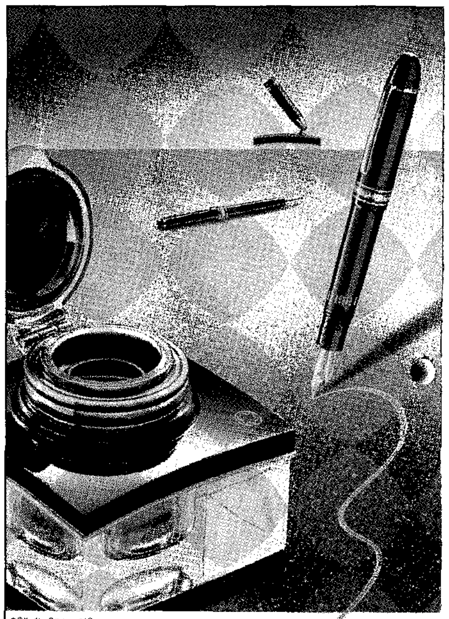

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are no fewer than four scenes in which one of the main characters takes leave of the others, then thinks better of it and reappears.) The movie has the strange quality of seeming constantly on the verge of transcending itself anyway, and that's primarily because of Pfeiffer's performance: the leisurely rhythm that Kaplan and Roos establish is like a steady, familiar slow-blues groove to set off her spectacular solo. She's brimming with energy here. Lurene is a woman who keeps her emotional confusion at bay by impulsive action and non-stop ditzy chatter, and Pfeiffer renders her whirlwind personality with amazing concentration; the character is never just a collection of vivid traits, and the performance is never just a series of showy effects. Pfeiffer gives this mixed-up, ostensibly rather silly woman the depth and comic richness of a Chekhov character, and does it without obvious effort. Her style is simple, light, transparent; all she seems to care about is understanding as thoroughly and as lucidly as possible the person she's playing. Her exploratory spirit—her determination to make us see the world from someone else's point of view—is ideal for Lurene. While everyone around her drifts and weaves and runs off the road, Pfeiffer keeps going farther, on a straight line, with her eyes on the prize.

It is, perhaps, a sign of progress that a big-budget commercial picture like "The Bodyguard" can feature a romance between a white man and a black woman without ever making the racial difference an issue. It would be a more encouraging sign, of course, if the movie were any good. According to the screenwriter (and co-producer), Lawrence Kasdan, "The Bodyguard" was written in 1975 as a possible vehicle for Steve McQueen. The hero, Frank Farmer, is a retired Secret Service man who is hired to protect a famous singer named Rachel Marron. Seventeen years ago, the female lead must have been intended for a white actress. Kasdan may have hoped to snare Streisand. Apparently without having changed anything in the screenplay, Kasdan has filled the Rachel Marron role with the likable, pretty pop diva Whitney Houston. Who else? Madonna? (She doesn't look as if she needed much protection, somehow.) Besides, with Houston and a white male star the picture might appeal to different audiences—more segments of the market. This isn't exactly racial daring; it's just another crossover attempt.

The movie, directed by Mick Jackson, is a formulaic and ruinously long thriller that might have been more fun if its absurdities had been played as high camp. (The climax is an assassination attempt at the Oscar ceremony. Imagine what John Waters might do with that.) Houston, in a variety of glitzy costumes, belts a few forgettable songs for the soundtrack album and flings herself repeatedly at the taciturn hero, begging him for both sex and manly state-of-the-art security. No, this really isn't a very enlightened picture. In lieu of Steve McQueen, Kevin Costner plays the title character of "The Bodyguard," in a fuzzy crewcut that's more travesty than homage. Costner is very grim; he looks as if he were still troubled by inconsistencies in the Warren Commission report. Maybe the filmmakers should have given *his* role to Madonna. Talk about crossover potential. ◆

TELL IT TO THE MARINES

by Michael Sragow

"A Few Good Men," which stars Tom Cruise as a glib Harvard Law grad who prefers playing in a softball league to practicing legal hardball, is a yuppie version of "The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial": a military-courtroom drama that puts on stale airs of importance. The accused are Lance Corporal Harold Dawson (Wolfgang Bodison) and Pfc. Louden Downey (James Marshall), marines in the Windward Rifle Security Company on Guantánamo Bay, who bound and gagged—and allegedly murdered—a fellow-marine, Pfc. William Santiago (Michael DeLorenzo).

A guilty verdict seems inevitable. Unable to endure the Cuban heat (he probably had a heart condition), and subjected to severe punishment for his weakness, the victim had begged repeatedly for transfer. As a last resort, he went

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outside the chain of command, to his senator, offering to name a marine who had committed a serious infraction—a "fence-line shooting" at a Cuban sentry. The man Santiago planned to finger was Dawson. The prosecution tries to persuade a military jury in Washington that Dawson and his disciple, Downey, motivated by anger and revenge, stuffed a poisoned rag in Santiago's mouth. But the chief defense counsel, Lieutenant Daniel Kaffee (Cruise), argues that Dawson and Downey intended to shave Santiago's head, not murder him, and that they were merely obeying orders to administer a Code Red—an illegal hazing that marines mete out to soldiers who don't live up to Corps standards and to the leatherneck code of "Unit! Corps! God! Country!"

The most authentic emotion in the movie is the disdain Dawson has for his lawyer. Kaffee is a playboy of the judicial world, who has earned his reputation for slick plea bargaining, while Dawson won't betray the Marine Corps's unwritten law even if that would get him and his buddy a lighter sentence. When Kaffee eventually refuses to take any of the easy ways out, and commits himself to seeking justice for his client, we're supposed to share Dawson's burgeoning respect for him. We're also supposed to applaud the rest of the defense team—Lieutenant Sam Weinberg (Kevin Pollak) and Lieutenant Commander Joanne Galloway (Demi Moore). The prematurely sage Weinberg won't let his disgust at the defendants' gung-ho cruelty muck up their case. Goody Two-Shoes Galloway, who champions the accused from the outset, learns to temper her passion with professionalism. They're what the *movie* means by a few good men: they come to understand the balance a serviceman should strike between implacable duty and human decency.

The writer, Aaron Sorkin (who adapted his own hit play), and the director, Rob Reiner, seem to think the story has something to say about legal and military honor. But the moral discussions operate like a bad pair of elevator shoes: it's obvious that their function is to lift black-and-white melodrama into message-movie paradise. The whole film, with its steady, important-picture pacing and its bits of pseudo-profundity, is a piece of glorified banality. (That goes for Reiner's foursquare visual style, too; I gave up counting how many times he cuts to the memorial statue of marines planting the Stars and Stripes on Iwo Jima.) As soon as the investigation begins, you know that Daniel Kaffee and company, for all their huffing and puffing, are pitted not against each other, or even against the equally trim and alert prosecutor, Captain Jack Ross (Kevin Bacon), but against two real heavies: Colonel Nathan Jessep (Jack Nicholson), the dinosaur in charge at Guantánamo, who is a highly decorated combat veteran with a future at the National Security Council; and Lieutenant Jonathan James Kendrick (Kiefer Sutherland), a fire-and-brimstone patriot who believes in God and Jessep, hold the Mom and apple pie. Jessep authorized the Code Red, and Kendrick commanded the men to carry it out. When Kaffee puts Jessep on the stand, it's Daniel against Goliath.

Kaffee's aversion to open court stems from a reluctance to compete with the memory of his father, a legendary attorney. In effect, Kaffee's antiheroism gives viewers one more reason to root for him: we're meant to cheer for him to get Dawson and Downey off *and* to break out of the prison of his own cocky complacency. "A Few Good Men" is the kind of crowd-pleaser in which every defect in the good guys adds to their stature. When it comes to the drama's issues, Sorkin doesn't shoot across the fence line—he straddles it. His script flirts with anti-military sentiments only to esteem the bravery of men who, in Galloway's words, "stand on a wall" and say, "Nothing's gonna hurt you tonight." It indulges in lawyer-bashing only to endorse flagrant courtroom tricks—as long as they're used on behalf of the Truth (which, conveniently, is never in doubt). The script is at its clumsiest when it acknowledges ethical complexities. Weinberg may compare Dawson and Downey to Nazis following orders, but Dawson washes away the Jewish lawyer's qualms in the closing minutes by conceding that a marine's mission is to protect the weak, not persecute them, as he and Downey persecuted Santiago. The movie is morally jury-rigged; any legitimate debate takes place on the side of the angels, so even when Kaffee and his crew differ, they represent democracy in

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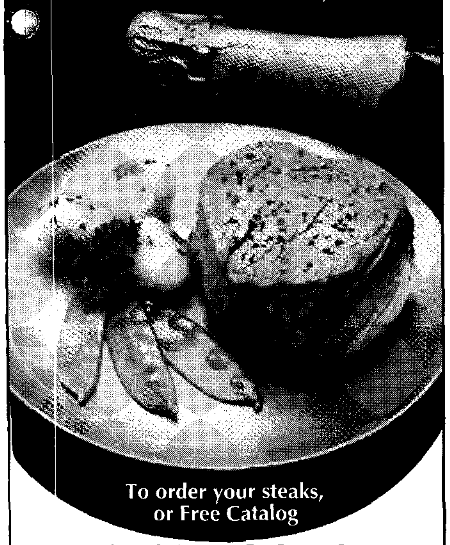

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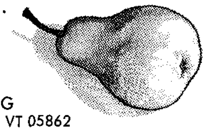

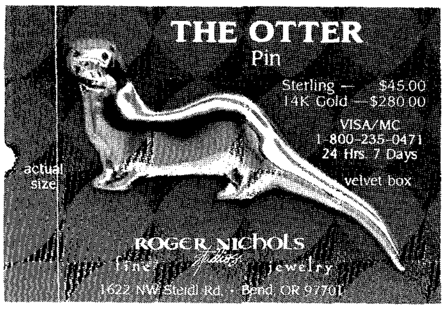

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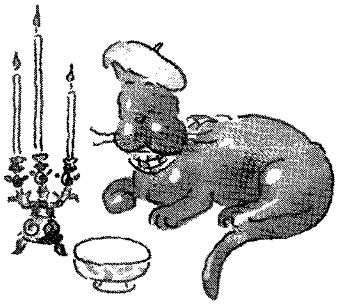

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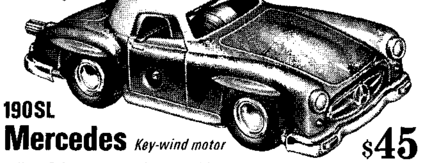

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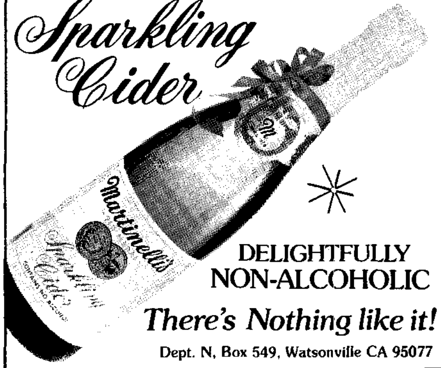
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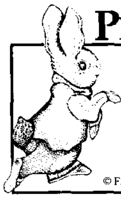
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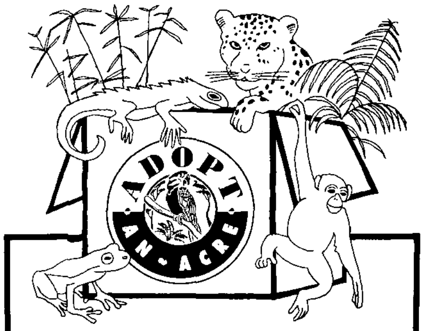
action. The audience's sympathy is undivided, and its attention is pinned to Kaffee's attempt to bring down that monster Jessep.

The role of a Marine megalomaniac is a natural for Nicholson—the warped flip side of his Navy signalman in "The Last Detail." At first, the cheap ease of it all works for him. Nicholson delivers a full assortment of sly intonations and mannerisms; whether he's embarrassing the defense team with his Neanderthal sexism or pulling rank on his second-in-command (J. T. Walsh), he brings a scurrilous savor to his showoff lines. The excess energy he emanates when Jessep is spewing bile or idling carries suggestions of banked resentment and bitterness, and a tinge of self-loathing. It's as if Jessep were scarred by the thought of what he *hasn't* experienced in a lifetime of harsh military service. But Jessep is the script's fall guy, and after pulling off a couple of tough scenes Nicholson has nowhere to go but down. He turns into a TV-movie version of himself—William Devane, perhaps.

Most of the others begin at the stage of routine video performance and stay there. Tom Cruise once again proves his proficiency at frat-house affability. His acting is all on one level. Making stupid jokes or getting stupid drunk, he's far too ingratiating, and in the big trial scene it's impossible to tell whether Kaffee is feigning nervousness or experiencing it. Moore is keyed up to play an aggressive career woman, but the character is jarringly incompetent from her opening scene, when she fumblingly rehearses her request to take on Dawson and Downey's case herself. There's a sad incongruity between Moore's strong-necked profile and her lack of authority, and between Galloway's intellectual sharpness as an Internal Affairs officer and her awkwardness in action. She comes off more callow than necessary—more callow than Kaffee. As Weinberg, Pollak has a few comic snippets early on, and Christopher Guest is amusing as a weaselly doctor, but Kevin Bacon, as the prosecutor, gives the most full-bodied performance. You find yourself believing he *is* a career serviceman—not because of his flattop haircut but because he's marinated in Marine tradition. His boyish competitive streak emerges from a saltier place than Cruise's. Whenever the prosecutor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gets a chance to score, Bacon's no-nonsense professionalism reminds you of how much better courtroom drama is when the adversaries are permitted to be equals (as they were in Costa-Gavras's recent "Music Box").

What brings "The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial" to mind isn't just the pretentious presentation of a military court but also the dramatis personae—hot-shot college men, confused enlisted men, a conscience-ridden Jewish attorney, and an unhinged Captain Queeg-like officer—*and* the legal strategy of turning a trial into an exposé of the officer's madness. Indeed, in the showdown you keep waiting for Jessep to start manipulating two steel balls. At the time of its 1954 Broadway première, Herman Wouk's play was seen for what it was: a gripping theatre piece that shamelessly used points of honor and morality for purposes no higher than a histrionic form of Ping-Pong. But that play was a model of incisiveness compared with "A Few Good Men." (Wouk allowed an irony to hang in the air: when the defense attorney in "Caine" confronted a pro-Queeg shrink with the statement "You say his military career is a result of his disturbance," the psychiatrist responded, "Most military careers are.") The issues in "A Few Good Men" have been chewed over for centuries; all that Sorkin and Reiner succeed in doing is finally reducing them to cud. ♦

Lost in Ryan's stellar exemplary performance was enough to overshadow even Anderson's fabulous third-inning running grab catch of a Brian Downing's line drive in the third inning. The ball seemed Lost in Ryan's exempliary performance was Anderson's running catch of Brian Downing's line drive in the third inning. The ball seemed certain to hit off the wall for a double, but at appeared to have off-the-wall-double written all over it. But Anderson, running in a full sprint tilt, leaped at when he got to the wall, crashing hard into it but hit it hard and making the catch caught the ball.
—*Washington Post.*

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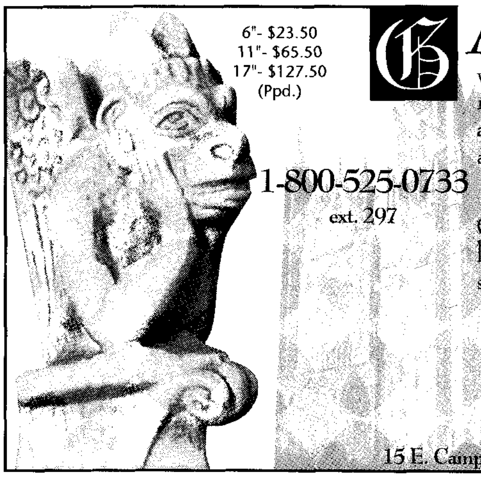

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by Paul Griffiths

WALTER SCOTT'S "The Bride of Lammermoor" is a chattery sort of book, voiced by a narrator who takes a leisurely amble toward the dénouement he has long been telling us is going to arrive, and who offers local color not so much in descriptive landscapes as in roundabout discourses: dialogue scenes in which servants and beldams regale each other (and the reader, whose patience may be less) in Lowland Scots. But at the center of the story is a silence. Lucy Ashton, the unhappy bride of the title, has never been a great talker; once she is mad, having stabbed Bucklaw on their wedding night, she has only one line: "So, you have ta'en up your bonny bridegroom?" A couple of days later comes her death, "without her being able to utter a word explanatory of the fatal scene."

Opera, though, has to play by different rules, under which calamity takes the form not of silence but of extended vocal extravagance; and, just as the bulk of the Scott novel is a three-hundred-page prologue to a tragedy, so Donizetti's treatment of it is a way of reaching two great numbers—Lucia's mad song and her adored Edgardo's ensuing solo of despair and suicide. The inexorable turning of events—Edgardo's absence, Lucia's forced marriage, Edgardo's return—can't now numb them but must push them toward the brink (a brink needed even by operatic characters) where aria becomes inescapable. The problem of the piece in performance is how to take account both of the realistic world in which the dread circumstances unfold and of the nonrealistic world into which Lucia, in particular, is finally catapulted.

Francesca Zambello's new production of "Lucia di Lammermoor" at the Met makes the jump too early. Right at the start of the opera, we're in the graveyard that Donizetti and his librettist, Salvadore Cammarano, reserved for Edgardo's scene at the end. In John Conklin's set, huge rectangles of Gothic masonry are held in mid-tumble, the stage is littered with cracked tombs, moonlight shines from a Caspar David Friedrich sky, and, in the center, against a rock exuding a weird sapphire phosphorescence, leans Lucia, in a dress of the same color. Ms. Zambello's note in the program book explains that she and her team "turned for inspiration" to the "melancholy vistas" of Friedrich, along with "the brooding, disturbed mindscapes of Edgar Allan Poe" and "the foreboding, hallucinatory water colors of Victor Hugo"—all, as she points out, contemporaries of Donizetti. But then

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so is Michael Jackson a contemporary of Stephen Hawking: the Zeitgeist is a protean creature. And the case for this opera as "a disintegrating landscape not far removed from Poe's 'The Fall of the House of Usher' " doesn't stick. Donizetti, Cammarano, and Scott were all far too robustly sane for that. To take the most obvious point first, where the force of the Poe story comes from unexplained, half-insinuated reasons and occurrences, the fatalities of Lammermoor have a tediously straightforward explanation; there's no dark secret. Then, there's the difference of form: the fall of the house of Usher is really happening all the time (this might have been the story for the stopped-frame collapsing ruins of Mr. Conklin's set), whereas the fall of the house of Lammermoor is a sudden catastrophe.

Not so here. Beginning in a churchyard, the opera continues as if it were a dance of ghosts. The chorus has been banished to the pit (where it remains throughout the evening), and the huntsmen of Lammermoor emerge from the fractured graves as a posse of whiskery mutes in gray plaid, who patrol the stage in geometrical patterns. In the next scene, Lucia's companion, Alisa, is no clear mirror to her soul but, instead, a crabby-fingered creature who bears more relation to the wisewoman Ailsie Gourlay of the book, and who is made to sound thoroughly menacing by Judith Christin's performance. Lucia ought to be scared out of her wits, not mooning about—even lying flat on her back at one point—telling stories. But at least Ms. Zambello and her costume designer, Martin Pakledinaz, achieve in Alisa what the production note suggests is the more general aim, of exhibiting types rather than characters. It isn't at all so obvious that we're supposed to see Lucia as "a pre-Raphaelite beauty" (such beauties are inconceivable off-canvas anyhow), the Lammermoor men as "sinister, stiff-backed Victorian silhouettes," and Edgardo as "an icon of the dream lover from Romantic literature." Enrico, Raimondo, and Normanno just look well buttoned up against the Scottish weather, and tenors in Italian opera are still so much expected to be Romantic idols that Richard Leech's open shirt and flowing hair cannot give the effect of an adopted persona or a caricature.

In the second act, the production be-

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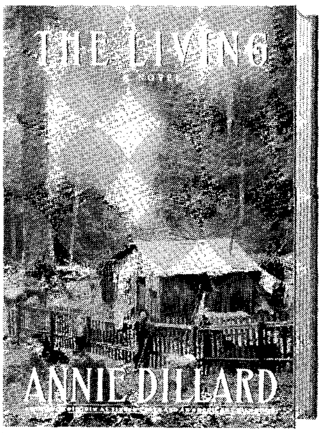

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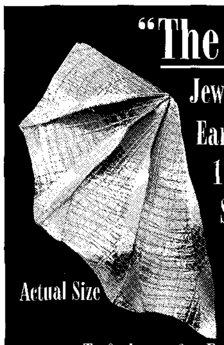

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gins to show its ironic colors more clearly. The behavior of the mime chorus is more tightly choreographed, its action more thundering with symbolism. Each chorus member—and the chorus is all men, so that Lucia, who in the first act has been seen only with her confidante and her lover, comes now into a realm that's wholly male—carries a long red staff and a large piece of paper in the same crimson. The heroine goes around collecting these papers and gathering them into a rose, and, though the image is rather beautiful, it loses something by being too careful and deliberate, and too easily diagnosed as representing how Lucia is pressed with false reports of Edgardo's disaffection. Its worst fault, however, is that it suggests an escape from normality too early in the show.

The production then bounds right clear of the everyday for the entry of Arturo, the man chosen by Lucia's family to meet her in the bedchamber. In the opera, as in the novel, or in any Greek tragedy, we don't see the violent assault, but here Arturo is almost slaughtered by the production when he comes on. A plaque of Death the Rider flies in, against a sky filled with shatter-edged sheets of serpentine marble, and Arturo rises through the floor on an elevator, costumed in the rich cream and gilt of the Ingres portrait of Napoleon in coronation robes. One returns to Ms. Zambello's note in order to find out what this apparition is meant to be, and duly gets her explanation of him as "the very emblem of the corrupting, wealthy lord." Poor man. He's a figure who elicits sympathy for having to carry that burden of stateliness and self-importance, and it's as well the part is a small one, or else he'd steal the heart (especially when he's being sung in such a sophisticated and beautiful way by Paul Groves). Then comes bathos. "Where's Lucia?" Arturo asks, and can do so only by looking steadfastly away from the lady who—still in luminous sapphire, amid so much that's monochrome and dun—is lying just ten yards from him. One appreciates Ms. Zambello's urge to eliminate entrances and exits, so that the few that remain—Edgardo's in the first act, Arturo's in the second, Lucia's in the third—can be momentous. But she has to take care of the consequences. It's a mark of her expertise, her seat-of-the-pants driving of this production, that she can scramble back to a marvellous stage picture for the sextet, where Lucia's blue and the solid carmine of the sky shine alone out of the gloom.

The third act begins with music rarely heard: the Wolf's Crag scene, which provides stirring stuff for Edgardo and Enrico, and also for the orchestra. Marcello Panni, conducting, finds a more suitable home for his thrust and intemperateness in this passage than he did in the sextet, though the scene does lengthen a long evening, and add to the delay of an outcome that the production has lost the means to present as any kind of surprise or transgression. All that can be done is to pile yet more coffins on the stage, making a positive hillock of them for Lucia to descend, as if Arturo Bucklaw were only the last of a gross of husbands she has murdered. Since the chorus remains in the pit, it's possible for her to sing the opening part of the mad scene from an empty stage, yet the production doesn't make as much of this as it might. Although there's nobody present to act out horror at the sight of her, and although there's nothing horrific to be seen, since her nightdress is of unstained white, she clambers and totters as if being shuddered by insanity. Perhaps if she'd stood quite still we might have better understood that the real shock here is that of a dramatic character who has disintegrated to leave only an operatic animal, a voice let loose.

In June Anderson's vocal performance, thoroughly astonishing as it is, we're also given only the tantalizing possibility of that disintegration—or, to put it another way, that purification into elemental singing. Just as the production dives headlong into anti-naturalism too soon, so Ms. Anderson is perfected voice not just for the mad scene but all through. In the first act, her singing is already as cold, distilled, and uninflected as the moonbeams playing on the set. The sheer accomplishment is mesmerizing: the control of pitch throughout the register and through any interval, the accuracy of attack and navigation above *the staff, the extended single notes* produced like a sequence of diamonds, the radiance in the tone from end to end of this long scene, the ornamentation that no pianist could make more crystalline. It would be absurd to ask for more; perhaps what we need is less—less of a jeweller's display and more of the physiological, more of a sense that Lucia in this act is singing about something—[illegible] that there could be some difference in the last act, where she is only and absolutely singing.

As it is, Ms. Anderson's mad scene is more of the same, which is to say that it's more icy amazement. Of course, there's a thrill to that, to the unearthly precision of a voice that sounds less organic and endangered than the flute it follows into the ozone layer. But it would have been a thrill that meant something if it had represented a change from what we'd heard before. However, the problems of this scene don't principally concern Ms. Anderson, who will probably spin on in sublime virtuosity whatever anyone says or does or asks her to do onstage. The production, having established Lucia as escaped into a kind of free-flying innocence, oddly requires her to filthy herself with crude theatre in the second part of the scene, after the intervention of the Lammermoor men. She discovers red paint (and red light) in one of the open graves and, at this late point, daubs her costume: there are various ways in which one might interpret the gesture, none of them very satisfactory or justifying the awkwardness. More brutally still, she stabs her poignard three times into the stage boards during an unaccompanied phrase, creating an outrageous effect of vandalism that—like a mugging at a garden party—can't say anything in such a context.

No performance of this opera can quite avoid an anticlimax when, after Lucia's vocal delirium is over, another scene begins, so that Edgardo can have his turn. In the present production there's the substantial mitigation of Mr Leech in the part. With his rush of ardent vigor, he stands in decisive contrast to Ms. Anderson's treasuring of the title role, and yet the expressive immediacy and abundance are directed with a taut care for musical line and clean, clear sound. The excitement is engaging; one is quickly made fond of the guy. And in

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that way Edgardo seems more a victim of the piece than does Lucia, while Arturo, as I've suggested, is a victim of the production. Some things in Ms. Zambello's staging, however, suggest that we should see Lucia as the only victim. Part of the mad scene, for instance, is watched over by Raimondo in stern profile (in his bands, he's very much the mean-minded Presbyterian pastor of the novel): perhaps he's there as one of the "Victorian silhouettes," making sure the lady does what's required of her. But the effect is weakly staged and, in any case, beside the point. Lucia's mad scene is not a long-drawn-out passion created for a female character by a cast of men (and, beyond them, by a male trio of authors); it's the attainment of a dream one must guess that all operatic characters would have to cherish—the dream of exiting the shell of a dramatic role to command the stage by voice alone. In the light of that attainment by Lucia the closing scene for Edgardo is anticlimactic in another, more positive sense, as the tragedy of a character unable to make the same leap, and convinced that in stabbing himself he will surely die.

The other roles in this opera don' offer much. I've mentioned Mr. Groves excellence and Ms. Christin's uncanniness; there's also a noble Enrico from Juan Pons, with an apt touch of gravel in the voice, and a ready Normanno from John Horton Murray. Neither of these good fellows is as sinister as Ms. Zambello would like to suppose, and it may be that Paul Plishka's unsteady performance as Raimondo comes from an effort to make the part carry a greater weight of darkness than it can bear. Ms. Zambello, to go back again to her note, sees in the opera "a tale of psychological terror of emotional blackmail, and of sexual politics set in the half-seen realm of the unconscious," and though the first part of this statement contains a bit of the truth there's nothing half seen or unconscious about the motives that drive these men there's no hint, for instance, of the incest theme that curdles Poe's narratives and no suggestion that Raimondo, like a churchman in Victor Hugo, secretly lusts after the heroine. The clarity of "Lucia di Lammermoor" in its narrative line may be more difficult for us to handle than any amount of gothic nightmare.

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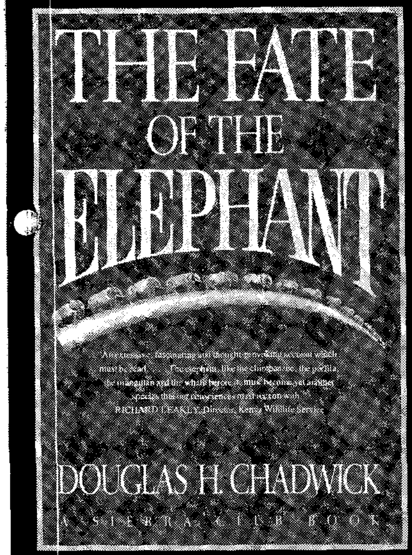

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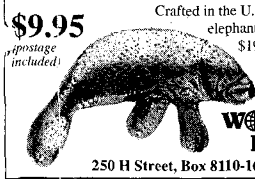

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It's also possible that the skewness of this production was occasioned not just by an excessive generalization from the period, and not just by a feminist critique, but by a realization that this was the Met, and that the barbarians were being invited in through the gates—apparently, at the direct behest of the emperor himself, James Levine. Ms. Zambello is certainly no fool. What she has provided is a grand show completely within Met traditions, and a show that's provocative in just the measure that was perhaps expected from her. But she needs all her flair and imagination to overcome—as after that crazy episode of Arturo's ascent from nowhere—her self-consciousness and taste for mischief.

PHILIP GOSSETT, in another note in the program book, makes the interesting point that all we know of nineteenth-century drama before Ibsen is opera. "When is the last time you saw a play by Victor Hugo or Antonio García Gutiérrez?" he asks. Well, quite. But there may be nearer sorts of theatre that are no less hard to bring back among us, as the revival of "Einstein on the Beach," in the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Next Wave Festival, not only suggested but positively shouted and screamed. Maybe it was just that the original creators had walked away from the beach to explore more fertile areas: some of Philip Glass's long-standing musical associates were taking part, but not, this time, under his direction, and though Robert Wilson had apparently been present at rehearsals, the production was described in the program as "restaged by Charles Otte." But, however much Mr. Glass and Mr. Wilson were involved, they couldn't have been expected to reproduce an old piece with the fervor they might bring to a new one. It was no wonder that some of the half-hour scenes hung limp, and that the choreography, by Lucinda Childs—the only one of the principal creators of the 1984 BAM production present throughout this new run—was far more effective than much that lay around it. To the extent that it also looked far more professional, though, it worked against the thrust of the piece, which is that extremely modest talent—the talent of a small boy who stands on a gantry to send paper airplanes floating down onto the stage—can make miracles. ♦

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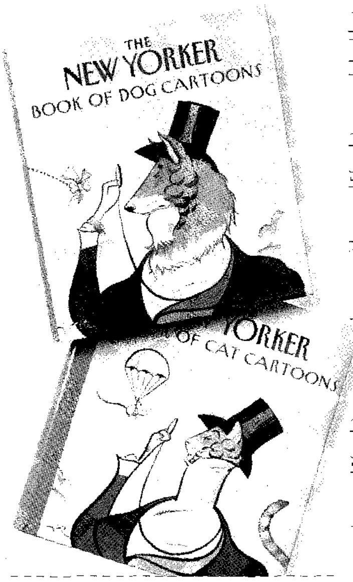

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BOOKS FROM OUR PAGES

A YEAR-END ROUNDUP OF BOOKS THAT ORIGINALLY APPEARED, IN WHOLE OR IN PART, IN THE NEW YORKER

Up in the Old Hotel, by Joseph Mitchell (*Pantheon, $27.50*).

An omnium-gatherum of a master reporter's work, this volume includes four of Mr. Mitchell's earlier collections, long out of print, and seven pieces previously uncollected. The book can be read as a monument to a New York that has mostly vanished—a raffish, romantic city of colorful, hard-drinking eccentrics, of street preachers and Gypsies and freak-show operators, and of solitary Melvillean types who never venture far from the waterfront. But the book is also a testimony to the enduring freshness of good writing, for the individual pieces never feel nostalgic, and the people portrayed emerge not as relics but as living embodiments of the essential Mitchell-like virtues: patience, persistence, an alertness to the music of speech, and a certain melancholy cheerfulness, which the author calls "graveyard humor."

Sleepwalker in a Fog, by Tatyana Tolstaya; translated from the Russian by Jamey Gambrell (*Knopf, $19*).

You can feel a clarifying distance from the hardships and the luxurious ennui of pre-*glasnost* Soviet life in these stories—beginning with the title piece, in which Denisov smokes and broods the day away on his antediluvian couch. Ms. Tolstaya's characters create their lives rather than simply inhabiting them: there's sly Dmitry Ilich, the sculptor who brags "I'm not Byron, I'm something else"; resourceful Lyonechka, who plans to conceive another Pushkin with his African girlfriend; and Zhenechka the nursemaid, who counsels her charges, "Don't wish to be the prettiest, wish to be the most beloved."

A Complicated War: The Harrowing of Mozambique, by William Finnegan (*California, $25*).

In 1988, Mr. Finnegan went to Mozambique to investigate a civil war in which nearly a million people had already been killed. The fighting made regular travel impossible, but he managed to hitch from province to province in official vehicles and rickety planes carrying emergency supplies. The results of the twelve-year anti-government campaign were visible everywhere: smashed machinery, torched schools, one-legged land-mine victims, hungry children fighting over kernels of maize. Yet Mr. Finnegan also describes the dedicated, tolerant Mozambicans he met at every turn; when a Portuguese pilot complains that there is no civilization left in Mozambique, the author remarks that he couldn't agree less.

As If It Matters, by Eamon Grennan (*Graywolf, $19*).

This Irish-born poet finds transcendence in ordinary settings—"Walking Home As the Rain Draws Off," the "Breakfast Room." He pays homage to Vermeer's domestic scenes more than once in this collection, but he has included, too, the familiar smells "of porter and sawdust, whiskey,/plug tobacco, boiled cabbage,/and the cold scent of a strange room/for the two of us"—the darker Irish interiors he shared with his father as a boy.

The Purloined Clinic: Selected Writings, by Janet Malcolm (*Knopf, $23*).

Inscrutable Ingrid Sischy and the *Artforum* Mafia; Tobias Schneebaum's homoerotic experiences in New Guinea; the therapeutic mettle of Salvador Minuchin; the moral vision of Václav Havel—all these matters come under review in Ms. Malcolm's latest collection. One needs only to enjoy the intellectual company of the author to appreciate these elegant pieces; no prior familiarity with her subjects is necessary.

Chinatown: A Portrait of a Closed Society, by Gwen Kinkead (*HarperCollins, $23*).

A hundred and fifty thousand Chinese are crowded into the small wedge of lower Manhattan known as Chinatown, and hundreds more arrive each month, to become trapped in a neighborhood plagued by gang violence, poverty, and extortion. Its residents are distrustful of outsiders, but Ms. Kinkead, a non-Chinese-speaking *low faan*, or barbarian, persists in her investigations, exploring sweatshops and illegal boarding houses, talking to gamblers and waiters, jewellers and revolutionaries; she is even invited to a midnight meeting of the Society Which Gathers Talented Chefs for Interchange.

The Age of Missing Information, by Bill McKibben (*Random House, $20*).

The Thoreauvian Mr. McKibben here compares a day he spent alone, hiking in the mountains, with a simulated "day" of watching TV. He viewed, on videotape, every minute of the programming that aired on May 3, 1990, on the Fairfax, Virginia, cable system—from Christian broadcasts and detergent commercials to A&E and MTV. The author is not a born enemy of the tube, but he makes the case that our "information age" is actually an age of harmful ignorance about the world; we spend so much time flipping from pseudo-news to infomercial that we rarely tune in to "the one great logoless channel" of the outdoors, which affords the viewer a perspective that is—literally—global.

Sub Rosa, by Susan Prospere (*Norton, $18.95*).

An India-rubber ball, an abandoned palace, a tree house drifting on high like a solitary raft, lipstick-smudged glasses left after a grownups' party: the props and fancies of an exquisitely remembered childhood are the mainstay of Ms. Prospere's imagery. But her poems are not so much about childhood as about what it gives way to: the first disillusionments of adulthood, the first losses—and, in her case, the discovery of a visionary, freewheeling vocabulary in which to explore these things.

Oh Canada! Oh Quebec! Requiem for a Divided Country, by Mordecai Richler (*Knopf, $23*).

Should Quebec—that linguistically maniacal province where bilingual road signs are illegal—secede from Canada altogether? For this account of the political woes assailing Quebec, Mr. Richler seems to have tracked down every passionate statement ever made about it, Anglophone or Francophone. The resul[illegible]s less like a "requiem" than like a late-night dispute in a bar: contentious, illogical, occasionally disturbing, but mostly funny—especially to American bystanders, grateful to be distracted by the excesses of their Canadian neighbors.

Under the 82nd Airborne, by Deborah Eisenberg (*Farrar, Straus & Giroux, $20*).

The characters in these stories inhabit a treacherous world: they are acutely aware of their surroundings, yet the threat of what they cannot know often rises up to overwhelm them. Two teen-age girls walk through an abandoned house, "fearful of churning up the delicate maze of silence"; a sheltered white housewife is hopelessly intimidated by her black housekeeper; and, in the title story, a mother who is visiting her daughter on impulse in Honduras can't quite figure out what the daughter's sinister fiancé is *doing* down there.

Temperaments: Artists Facing Their Work, by Dan Hofstadter (*Knopf, $24*).

The artists Mr. Hofstadter chooses to profile are not "temperamental" in the stereotypical sense. They tend to be elusive, disarmingly frank, and genial all at once. ("I am just a photographer like any other, only better!" exclaims Cartier-Bresson.) The author himself is a portraitist, who shows us things about his subjects that they are unable to see, and his palette of metaphors is extensive: Avigdor Arikha's brushstrokes melt on the surface of his canvases "like pats of butter"; Richard Diebenkorn sits in front of an unfinished picture "listening, like a magistrate or an arbitrator, to the painting's formal complaints."

Trying to Smile and Other Stories, by Sara Lewis (*Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, $19.95*).

Most of these stories about domestic arrangements and concerns turn on the familiar pivots of middle-class American life: a sister is asked to be a bridesmaid in her brother's wedding shortly after their mother's death; a smart, sad teen-ager finds it difficult to face graduation. What energizes and unites this début collection is the author's keen sense of life's intimate, everyday betrayals, and the surge of strength that can accompany their recognition.

After Henry, by Joan Didion (*Simon & Schuster, $22*).

Twelve pieces, beginning with a brief essay on the loss of the author's beloved editor Henry Robbins and ending with an analysis of the media treatment of the Central Park jogger case. The bicoastal Ms. Didion also deconstructs the contradictory coverage of the 1988 Hollywood writers' strike, and provides a witty gloss on the many tales that emerged from the Reagan White House. She maintains however, that New York is smitten with narrative like no other town—that whether or not a story becomes a *story* in this city determines its life or death as urban myth.

After the War Was Over, by Neil Sheehan (*Random House, $17*).

On a recent visit to Vietnam, the author of "A Bright Shining Lie" found the country in the midst of *doi moi*, or "new way"—a hopeful upheaval akin to *perestroika*. With his wife, Susan Sheehan (who collaborated on the account of the journey which appeared in this magazine), Mr. Sheehan returned to Saigon and, for the first time, toured Hanoi and the north. He is warmly welcomed by everyone—mothers of the war's "martyrs," doctors with almost no antibiotics at their disposal, an old ARVN buddy who survived the fall of Saigon submerged in a paddy field—and he is never blasé about the enterprising, generous spirit that characterizes these people, or about the hardships that characterize their lives.

Jesus' Son, by Denis Johnson (*Farrar, Straus & Giroux, $19*).

The title of this collection comes from an old Lou Reed song about what it feels like to be on a heroin rush. The stories themselves, though, are more often about bottoming out and looking for the next score or the next scam. The world evoked here is a back-street, neon-lit place in which events unfold with amphetamine swiftness, and have surreal and comic results, or else are slowed down to moments of lyricism so pure that they approach religious revelation.

The New Yorker Book of Dog Cartoons (*Knopf, $18*).

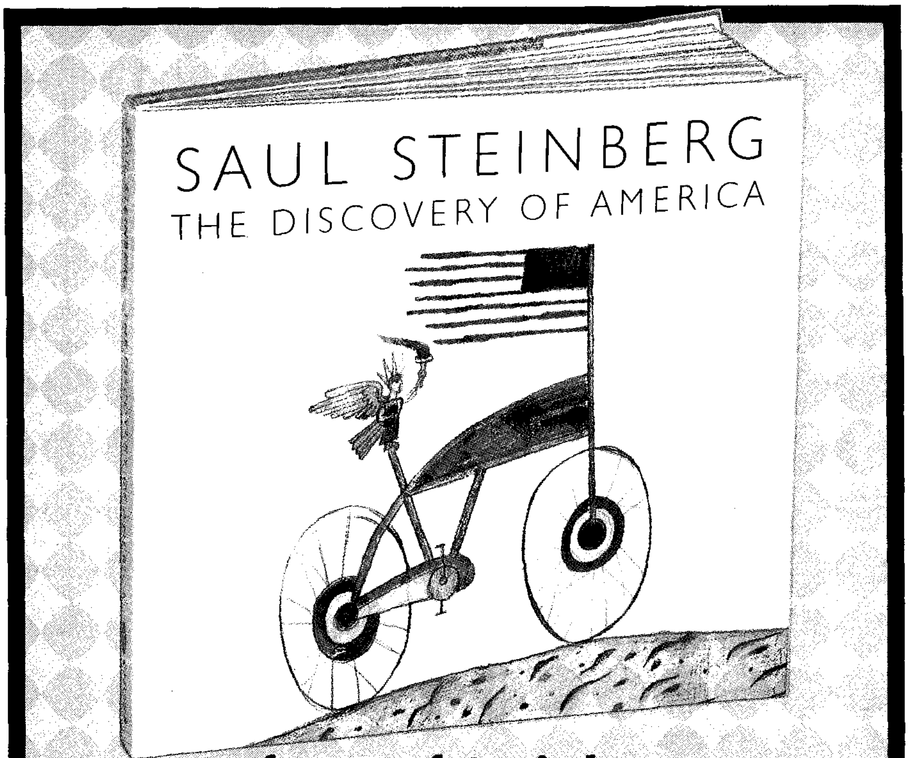
A selection of a hundred and one drawings from these pages, representing a wide variety of articulate canines and eccentric masters.

Billie Dyer and Other Stories, by William Maxwell (*Knopf, $18*).

Mr. Maxwell here remembers a handful of people from his home town of Lincoln, Illinois, ferrying them with gentle artifice into the land of fiction. We meet, among others, his grandfather Judge Blinn, who "did not entirely divest himself of the majesty of the law" when he came home from work, and his brother, who lost a leg as a small boy but dragged his artificial limb gallantly around the tennis court. Several stories are about the sadness of relations between "the front and the back parts of the house"—between the races, that is—and the author has a disarming way of not exempting himself from blame. His deceptively simple narrative technique is, in fact, a complex art of full disclosure.

A Woman Kneeling in the Big City, by Elizabeth Macklin (*Norton, $18.95*).

Ms. Macklin has been publishing her verse in tantalizing bit-by-bit fashion for over a decade. At last, her poems are collected, in a volume that seems a first book only in name; each line bears the stamp of its maker's maturity and patience. Like a quizzical cartographer, she renders her cityscape with faithful attention to each of its windows ("They aren't darkened or lighted/at random. It's a choice"), and traces the Dickinsonian landscapes of the mind and heart, which have no discernible existence outside the language—graceful and halting, quartzlike in precision—that describes them. ♦



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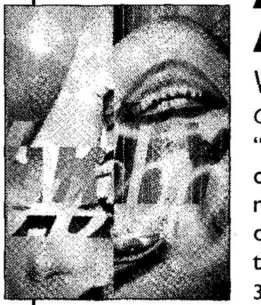

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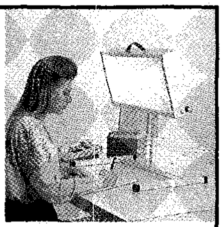

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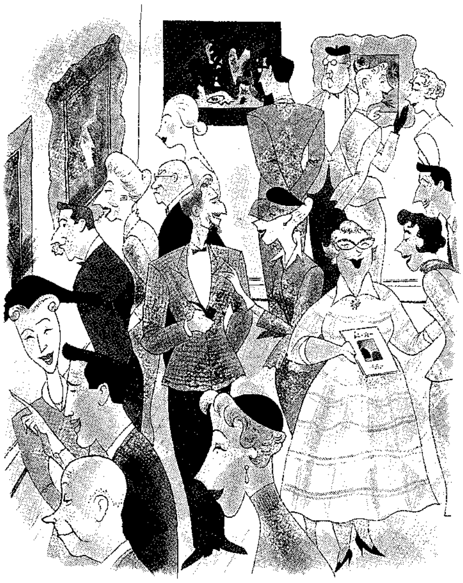
BOOKS

THE ART MARKET: GOING . . . GOING . . . GONE

by Calvin Tomkins

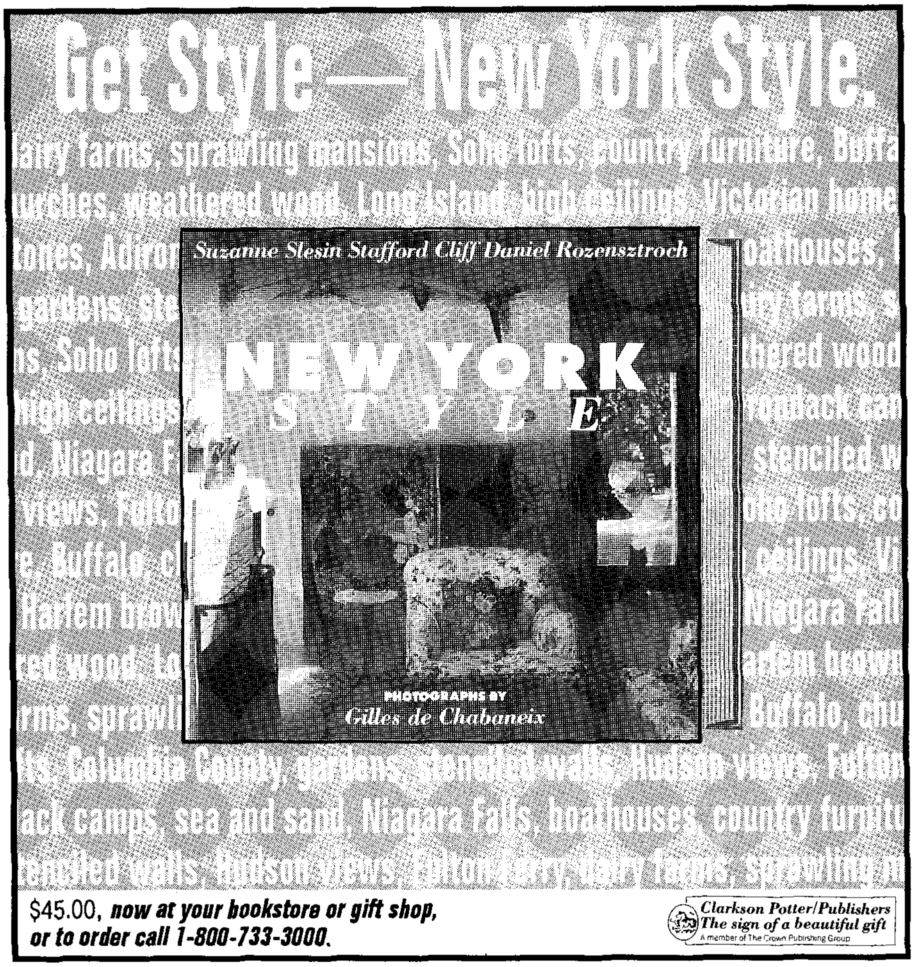
THE recent collapse of the art market has been welcomed by moralists, including a few picture dealers, and even by some artists, who argue that now we can get our minds off the insane prices of the nineteen-eighties and concentrate once again on true values in art. This is a bit naïve, to say the least. Money and painting have been inextricably intertwined for more than four hundred years—ever since artisan-painters began, in the early part of the sixteenth century, to work on portable panels and canvases, instead of on stationary walls and altars. The money has certainly overshadowed the art in recent years, during which we have seen a good deal more interest in the art market than in what is being traded there, and it may be that a saner balance between the two is now evolving. Meanwhile, a sense of controlled panic lies over the art scene. The other day, I asked Leo Castelli, who played such a major role in developing the bull market of the nineteen-eighties, why serious collectors were not taking advantage of the current situation to snap up true values at reduced prices. "There are no serious collectors," Castelli said, with notable asperity. "They do not exist."



Those who can suppress their moral aversion to the art-money nexus will find much to enlighten and entertain them in Peter Watson's "From Manet to Manhattan: The Rise of the Modern Art Market" (Random House; $35). An English journalist who writes extensively on art matters, Watson has produced a well-researched, up-to-the-minute, and very readable sequel to Gerald Reitlinger's "The Economics of Taste," which was the groundbreaking study of fluctuations in picture prices from 1760 to 1960. The big problem in this sort of thing is how to arrive at currency-conversion rates that will show, for example, what 1880 pounds or francs or dollars were actually worth in terms of their 1992 purchasing power; Watson, like Reitlinger, concedes that there are too many imponderable elements to permit precise calculations. Citing recent statistical studies that are more sophisticated than those available to Reitlinger, though, he has come up with plenty of evidence to show that the price levels of the 1989-90 auction season, epochal as they may have seemed, were not totally unprecedented. The one hundred thousand pounds that J. P. Morgan spent for Raphael's Colonna Altarpiece in 1901, according to Watson's figures, was the equivalent of ten million four hundred thousand dollars in today's money. Even the inflated market for contemporary art has its historical echo, in the late nineteenth century, when Cornelius Vanderbilt paid fifty-three thousand dollars (a million two hundred thousand dollars today) for Rosa Bonheur's "The Horse Fair." Whatever doubts may arise about the reliability of such conversions, the book makes it clearer than ever that, first, the art market has more to do with social mobility than with aesthetics and, second, art as a long-term investment is nearly always a bad risk.

Watson has a precise date for the birth of the modern art market. It is 1882—the year the first Settled Lands Act was passed in England, and also the year of the Impressionists' seventh group exhibition in Paris. Under the Settled Lands Act, landed English gentry whose ncomes had been withered by cheap mported grain from America, and by he migration of their rent-paying tenant farmers to industrial jobs in the big cities, were allowed for the first time to sell ssets that had formerly been held in rust by the family estate from one generation to the next. As a result, the class hat had pursued the joys of art collecting nore assiduously than its counterparts in ny other nation now disgorged art treasures on a scale not seen since the Napoleonic era, contributing in the process to the rapid expansion of Christie's, Sotheby's, and the other auction houses. Prices rose sharply as America's rapacious millionaires entered the lists, and kept right on rising, with only the briefest of time-outs during the First World War, until the 1929 crash.

The Impressionist painters, who inally began to gain a measure of critical acceptance after the 1882 show, were a ignificant factor in the market by 1912. n that year, Louisine Havemeyer paid four hundred and thirty-five thousand rancs for Degas's "Dancers at the Barre," world record for a living painter and sum equal to more than one and a half million dollars today. Watson offers some interesting glosses on the apotheosis of Impressionism and Postmpressionism in the nineteen-eighties. Among the ten most expensive pictures ever sold at auction, four are by van Gogh and one is by Renoir.) The sensational prices achieved by Impressionist pictures at the 1958 Goldschmidt sale, he suggests, can be attributed at least in part to the 1956 Suez crisis, for by closng the Suez Canal it created a sudden lemand for very large cargo ships that could navigate the Cape of Good Hope, and that demand made huge profits for Stavros Niarchos, Basil Goulandris, and other Greek shipowners, who used some of their increased income for art-buying. mpressionist and Post-Impressionist pictures, which had excited such horror and derision when they were painted, had started at about this time to look ike a safe investment. Old Masters were oo scarce, Cubist and abstract works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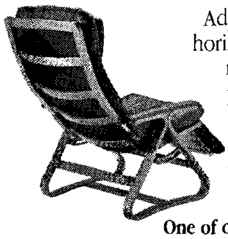

were too difficult, and Pop art had not yet made aestheticians of the masses. A Renoir, moreover, enabled you to proclaim your wealth without abandoning the pleasure principle.

FOR the enduring presence of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist hits at the top of the auction charts, Watson gives due credit to the Japanese. As he points out, the handful of Japanese artists who went to France in the eighteen-eighties and came back painting like Impressionists never had to do battle, as their mentors did, with a hostile art establishment; many Japanese "simply assumed that Impressionism *was* European painting," and they took to it instantly. "The important thing to grasp is that Impressionism was the first form of Occidental painting that the Japanese encountered," Watson writes, "and this chance occurrence powerfully influenced the country's own art and the taste of its people." Gauguin, van Gogh, and other European painters had been deeply influenced by looking at Japanese prints, but the reverse influence turned out to be much more pervasive and much longer-lasting. When the booming Japanese economy of the nineteen-eighties propelled a new class of eager art buyers into the salesrooms at Sotheby's and Christie's, the art they competed for with the greatest intensity was French Impressionism.

By 1988, the Japanese had added Picasso to their must list, and they drove his prices up to the point where there are now four Picassos to match the four van Goghs on that roster of the ten most expensive pictures sold at auction. It has been estimated that the Japanese bought forty per cent of the Impressionist and modern works sold at auction during the late nineteen-eighties. Their withdrawal from the art market in 1990 was the major factor in the market's collapse, and we are only now becoming aware of the unsavory underside of their art-buying binge. Watson writes, "The art scandals that surfaced in Japan in 1990 and 1991 . . . involved the fraudulent use of thousands of paintings to launder a slush fund of billions of yen, possibly to the benefit of organized crime and one or more political parties." Typically, a Japanese real-estate speculator who wanted to circumvent government curbs on a deal would pay the legal price, and in addition "sell" a painting to th landowner, on the understanding that i would be bought back a few month later for ten times the sale price. One bi real-estate conglomerate seems to hav acquired seven thousand three hundre and forty-three paintings within a fe months in 1990 for this purpose, "including works by Picasso, Degas Renoir, Chagall, Modigliani, Andre Wyeth, and a Japanese artist, Mat Kayama." Although the art scandals ar only one aspect of a widespread patter of corruption that has toppled powerfu politicians and led to bankruptcies an suicides in Japan, they will help to insur that the nineteen-eighties art market i remembered as a fool's paradise.

All this, of course, doesn't have anything to do with the making of art an with other true-blue values. Or does it Would Pop art have become such dominant force in the nineteen-sixties i the market had responded to it less enthusiastically? Conversely, would al those earnest Conceptualists, earth artists, body artists, performance artists and other non-painting specimens hav proliferated so strenuously in th nineteen-seventies if they hadn't ha a depressed and constricted art marke to turn their backs on? A serious stud of the effects of the market on the ar that is produced, either for it or in opposition to its pressures, might throw som light on the generally shared belief tha few major artists of any kind hav emerged during the last twenty-fiv years—a belief that will undoubtedl have a chilling effect on the market fo the next quarter century. ♦

WORDS OF ONE SYLLABLE DEPT.

[*From the Toronto Star*]

OTTAWA—Deeply shaken Brian Mulrone meets his cabinet and caucus tomorrow t appeal for solidarity amid a swirl of speculation about the fate of his government and hi leadership.

"None of us know what is going throug the Prime Minister's mind but I do no expect anything before the end of the year,' Metro MP Bill Attewell said yesterday.

When did grunge become *grunge*? Hov did a five-letter word meaning dirt, filth, tras become synonymous with a musical genre, fashion statement, a pop phenomenon?—*Ric Marin in the Times.*

By becoming a six-letter word?

HOTEL INSOMNIA
poems
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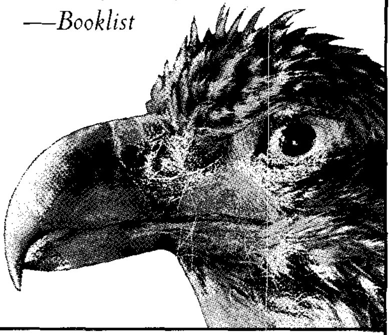
"Simic writes hushed and spare poems redolent with the saltiness of old, transatlantic sorrows and familiar yet faint memories. Here, his poetry is still, nearly mute, and wonderfully phosphorescent."
—*Booklist*



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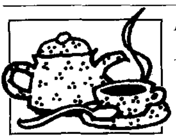

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BOOKS BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

The Trespassers
by Robert Roper (Ticknor & Fields; $19.95)

THIS novel about the regenerative potential of sexual passion borrows its plot from "Lady Chatterley's Lover" but departs from its model in graceful, surprising ways. The charged setting is a wild, densely forested ranch estate in the coastal mountains of Northern California, the heroine is a thirty-five-year-old Berkeley graduate who married an old-money scion in his deceptively radical youth, and the gamekeeper is a secretive marijuana grower and musician with uncanny expressive powers. There is nothing purple or declamatory about Mr. Roper's prose—it is, in fact, almost chaste in its precision and balanced modulation—and his lovers, Catherine and Henry, are contemporary social creatures who confront vexing issues of marital acrimony, parental responsibility, and property with all the irony and self-scrutiny of their generation. Yet this is not quite a realistic work, either. Catherine's carnal awakening gives her an awareness of "a separate existence inside her body," and a corresponding quality of Arcadian enclosure makes the story in part a fable about erotic sincerity as a romantic quest. Fortunately, this exquisite novel explores the dream states of pleasure with its own captivating assurance.

GENERAL

The Great Melody: A Thematic Biography and Commented Anthology of Edmund Burke
by Conor Cruise O'Brien (Chicago; $34.95)

MR. O'BRIEN maintains that the theme of Burke's life and work was his opposition to the abuse of power; hence his sympathy with Catholic Irish, American revolutionaries, and Indians oppressed by the British East India Company, and his enmity toward the French Revolution. The author bases this reading on a hunch that Burke felt guilty because his father had conformed to the Established Church to evade the legal disabilities from which Catholics in the British Isles still suffered in the eighteenth century. Mr. O'Brien worships Burke, and his biography is also a running battle with Sir Lewis Namier and his students of eighteenth-century parliamentary history who have belittled Burke, and a secondary scrap with modern radicals who have demonized him as a reactionary for his views on France. The author's contentious enthusiasm brings Burke and his era to life. This isn't a balanced view, but it's fresh, animated, idiosyncratic, steeped in its subject; it reads like a letter from one of Burke's best friends.

The American Way of Birth
by Jessica Mitford (Dutton; $23)

MS. MITFORD here applies her jaunty style to a collection of horror stories. This anecdotal survey of American obstetrical and gynecological care reveals the chasm between rich and poor that is characteristic of American medical practice generally. But the patterns of care the author describes also illustrate the familiar, unfortunate mixture of contempt and embarrassment that men often bring to feminine matters. We learn something about the history of obstetrics in this century. Fads in delivery styles, for example, have generally represented less concern for mother and child than for the convenience of doctors. Greed plays a part, too, when state medical societies war on even the best-qualified nurse-midwives because they charge less than physicians. (California's Medical Board arrested a nurse-midwife who had safely delivered three hundred and fifty babies, but it took eight years to revoke the license of a doctor who was eventually convicted of murdering eight infants and one fetus.) Ms. Mitford is informative and levelheaded—she recognizes that people's needs differ and doesn't put forward any single obstetrical panacea. And she is mannerly in reporting the routine outrages (including the financial ones) that accompany having a baby in this country.

After Tet: The Bloodiest Year in Vietnam
by Ronald H. Spector (Free Press; $24.95)

IN a lucid style that enables readers to follow the action without getting lost in the fog of war or a cloud of technical military jargon, this superb history describes a series of costly American successes in combat whose outcome remained inconclusive, and helps us grasp many of the reasons that victory eluded us. Much of what Mr. Spector tells us about the combat experience on the Communist side is unfamiliar and surprising, and his descriptions of racial conflict, drug use, and inexperience—because of constant turnover—among the American troops are especially illuminating. Mr. Spector's own service in Vietnam enriches the realism of the book, but its unique value is applied intelligence, analyzing events and the policies that shaped them.

Equatoria
by Richard Price and Sally Price (Routledge; $25)

ANTHROPOLOGY, having heroically defined itself as the study of man, has sunk into a deserved moral crisis. The authors, white academics, tentatively explore the crisis by questioning their own approach to their dark-skinned "primitive" subjects—in this case, the Maroon tribes descended from rebel slave groups in Suriname and French Guiana. In an absorbing journal of a trip spent gathering artifacts in the river villages of French Guiana, the Prices continually question whether such traditional art belongs in the French-colonial museum it is destined for, and whether it can, within an urban exhibition space, faithfully represent an entire society. Canoeing to Maroon settlements in search of textiles and wood carvings, they offer startling images of a tropical river militarized against Suriname's civil war, of festering shanties perched on stilts, and of a people so psychologically colonized that they roam the jungle in sexy mail-order French fashions. The brutal arm-twisting tactics of earlier collectors are rejected as the authors purchase art work in a businesslike manner, yet, despite their extreme self-consciousness about the ethics of this buying spree, they neglect to examine the heart of the matter: the racial assumptions of their field of study. ♦

SHOUTS AND MURMURS

BRIGS 7, PHOONS 0, IN QUICKIE

by James Stevenson

NEW YORK, DECEMBER 6—It was yet another crushing loss for the injury-ridden N.Y. Typhoons (0–13) yesterday at Typhoon Stadium, the Phoons bowing to a superior (13–0) Philadelphia Brigands team, 7–0, in a game that lasted only four plays.

"A win at this juncture was critical for us," said Typhoon head coach Newt Oatner in his postgame locker-room press conference. "But, hey, it didn't happen."

Asked what went wrong, Oatner said, "We got off to a good start, but in the second down our edge began to dissipate, and by third down we were losing our momentum."

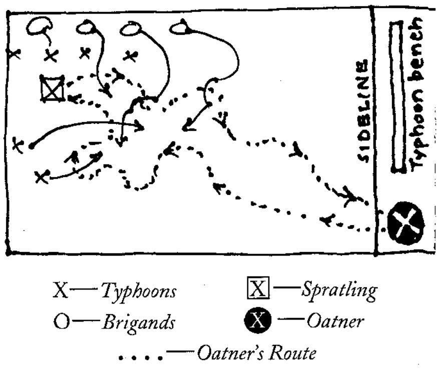
The second down, in which quarterback Don Spratling was sacked by his own wide receiver, was described by Oatner as "a normal mistake in a situation where you have a lot of pressure."

Oatner took the blame for his call on third down—a seventy-one-yard field-goal attempt—saying, "I felt it was imperative to get something on the board early in the game." The kick was called back on a rare penalty (fifteen yards, plus loss of down, for audible innuendo), leaving the Phoons in poor field position for fourth down. The ensuing surprise play—a quarterback sneak with a Hail Mary option—collapsed when the Brigands' free safety, Manley Gordon, intercepted the Phoons' snap from center and ran it in for a TD.

"Frankly, we were not prepared for that," said Oatner, "because I had not actually seen that happen before."

Unable to find eleven defensive players now willing to receive the Brigand kick, Oatner conceded the game to the Brigands.

THE OATNER INCURSION



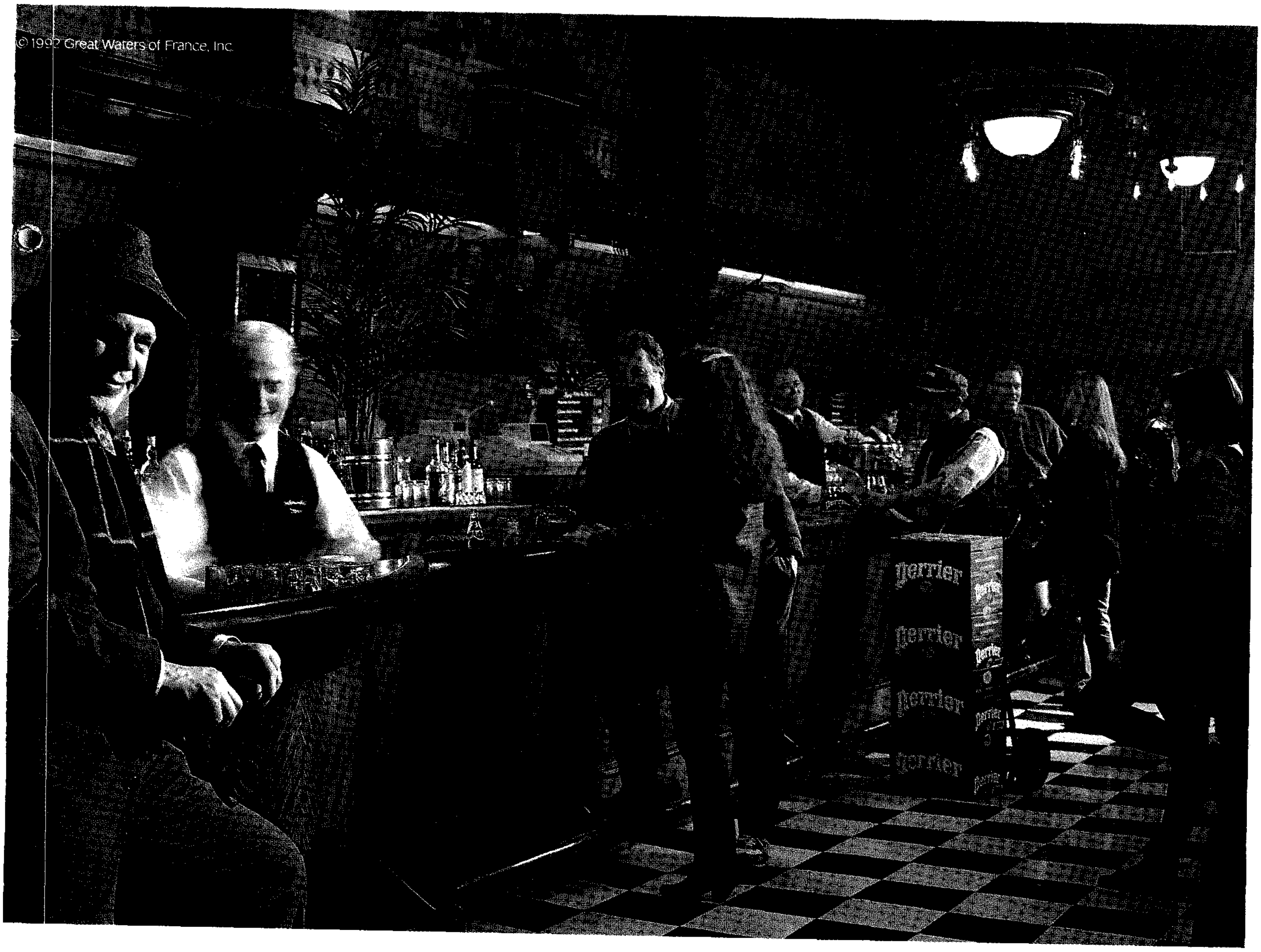
The coach was asked about charges that he was a major factor in the Typhoons' disastrous season. "Me?" he said, chuckling. "That's rich. It isn't me, it's the lousy players." Had Oatner been guilty of micro-managing, a reporter asked, when, during the first down, he ran out onto the field, dodging players, to explain the play to quarterback Spratling? (See diagram.) "It was well worth it," said Oatner. "Spratling hadn't cracked the playbook since June."

Was there a communications gap, a reporter asked. "Certainly not," said Oatner. "I'm close to the team. Many of them are good friends of mine, like that skinny linebacker with the Spanish name, and the short guy who's a defensive tackle."

Asked about his habit of gazing into the stadium audience for long intervals during the game, Oatner replied, "That's my own brand of stress management. I'm a people-person and looking at all those good folks up there enjoying themselves relaxes me, and when I turn my attention back to the game I feel fresh as a daisy."

Oatner denied a report that his headset was frequently tuned to Lite FM during games. "A complete fabrication," he said. "Leave me alone."

Ending the press conference, Oatner said "What we have to do now is put the Brigand game behind us. The way I see it, we're firmly positioned on the come-back trail, with a solid chance at a wild-card slot in the playoffs." ◆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